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IN THIRTY VOLUMES:

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*BY JOHN WESLEY, M.A.*

LATE FELLOW OF LINCOLN COLLEGE, OXFORD.

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THE LIVES
OF
VARIOUS EMINENT PERSONS,
CHIEFLY EXTRACTED FROM
MR. SAMUEL CLARK.

(Continued from Vol. XV.)

(XXIII.)

THE LIFE
OF
BISHOP BEDELL.

WILLIAM BEDELL was born at Black-Notley, in Essex, in the year 1570. He was the younger son of an ancient and good family. He was sent to Emanuel College, in Cambridge, and put under the care of DR. CHADDERTON, the famous Head of that House. And here all those extraordinary things, which rendered him afterwards so conspicuous, began to show themselves in such a manner, that he came to have a very eminent character both for learning and piety; so that appeals were often made to him, as differences or controversies arose in the University. He was put into Holy Orders by the Bishop-Suffragan of Colchester. In 1593 he was chosen Fellow of the College, and took his Degree of Bachelor of Divinity in the year 1599.

From the University he was removed to St. Edmund's-bury, in Suffolk, where he served long in the Gospel, with great success; the opening of dark passages, and comparing many texts of Scripture, together with a serious and practical application of them, being the chief subject of his sermons. He had an occasion, not long after his settlement in this charge, to show how little he either courted preferment, or was afraid of great men. For when the BISHOP of NORWICH proposed some things to his Clergy, with which they were generally dissatisfied, though they had not resolution enough to oppose them, he took that hard province upon himself; and did it with so much

strength of reason, as well as discretion, that many of those things were let fall: upon which, when his brethren magnified him for it, he checked them, and said, that he desired not the praises of men. His reputation was so well established, both in the University and in Suffolk, that when KING JAMES sent SIR HENRY WOTTON as Ambassador to Venice, at the time of the Interdict, he was recommended as the fittest man to go as Chaplain in so critical a conjuncture. He was very near being an instrument of a great and happy change in that republic. I need not say much of a thing so well known as were the quarrels of POPE PAUL V. and that republic; especially since the history of them is written so particularly by him that knew the matter best, P. PAULO. Some laws made by the Senate, restraining the excessive donations extorted from superstitious men, and the imprisonment of two lewd friars, in order to the execution of justice upon them, were the grounds of the quarrel; and upon those pretences, the ecclesiastical immunity from the secular tribunals was asserted to such a degree, that after that high-spirited Pope had tried what the spiritual sword could do, but without success, (his interdict not being observed by any but the Jesuits, the Capuchins, and the Theatines, who were upon that banished from the state,) he resolved to try the temporal sword next, according to the advice given him by CARDINAL BARONIUS; who told him, in the Consistory, that there were two things said to ST. PETER;—the first was, “Feed my sheep,” the other was, “Arise and kill;”—and therefore since he had executed the first part of ST. PETER’s duty, in “feeding” the flock, by exhortations, admonitions, and censures, without effect, he had nothing left but to “arise and kill.” Upon this the POPE, not finding any other Prince that would execute his Bulls, resolved to make war upon them himself. But when he saw that his censures had not created any distractions in the republic, and found their treasure and force likely to prove a match for the Apostolical Chamber, and for such forces as he could levy and pay, he was at last willing to accept

of a mediation; in which the Senate, though they were content to deliver up the two profligate friars, yet asserted their right, and maintained their laws, notwithstanding all his threatenings; nor would they so much as ask pardon, or crave absolution. But without going further into matters so generally known, I shall only mention those things in which MR. BEDELL had some share.

P. PAULO was then the Divine of the State; a man equally eminent for vast learning and prudence, and who was at once one of the greatest Divines, and one of the wisest men of his age. It must needs raise the character of BEDELL much, that an Italian, who, besides the caution that is natural to the country, and the prudence that obliged one in his circumstances to a more than ordinary distrust of all the world, was tied up by the strictness of that government to a very great reservedness with all people, yet took BEDELL into his very soul, and, as SIR HENRY WOTTON assured the late King, communicated to him the inward thoughts of his heart; and professed that he had learned more from him in all the parts of divinity, whether speculative or practical, than from any he had ever conversed with in his whole life. So great an intimacy with so extraordinary a person is enough to raise a character, were there no more to be added. P. PAULO went further; for he assisted him in acquiring the Italian tongue, in which BEDELL became such a master, that he spoke as one born in Italy, and penned all the sermons he then preached, either in Italian or Latin. In this last it will appear, by the productions of his pen yet remaining, that he had a true Roman style, inferior to none of the modern writers, if not equal to the ancients. In requital of the instruction which he received from P. PAULO in the Italian tongue, he drew up a grammar of the English tongue for his use, and for that of some others who desired to learn it, that so they might be able to understand our books of Divinity. He also translated the English Common-Prayer-Book into Italian; and P. PAULO and the seven Divines, who, during the interdict, were commanded by the Senate both to preach

and write against the POPE's authority, liked it so well, that they resolved to have made it their pattern, in case the differences between the POPE and them had produced the effect which they hoped and longed for.

The intimacy between them grew so great and so public, that when P. PAULO was wounded by those assassins who were set on by the court of Rome, upon the failing of which attempt a guard was set on him by the Senate, who knew how to value and preserve so great a treasure, and much precaution was used before any were admitted to come to him, BEDELL was excepted out of those rules, and had free access to him at all times. They had many and long discourses concerning religion. He found that P. PAULO had read over the Greek Testament with so much exactness, that having used to mark every word, when he had fully weighed the importance of it, as he went through it, he had by going often over it, and observing what he had passed over in a former reading, grown up to that at last, that every word was marked of the whole New Testament. And when BEDELL suggested to him critical explications of some passages which he had not understood before, he received them with the transports of one that leaped for joy, and that valued the discoveries of divine truth beyond all other things.

During his stay at Venice, the famous ANT. DE DOMINIS, ARCHBISHOP of SPALATA, came to Venice; and having received a just character of MR. BEDELL, he discovered his secret to him; and showing him his ten books, *De Republicâ Ecclesiasticâ*, which he afterwards printed at London, BEDELL took the freedom which he allowed him, and corrected many ill applications of texts of Scripture, and quotations of Fathers. For that Prelate, being utterly ignorant of the Greek tongue, could not but be guilty of many mistakes, both in the one and the other; and if there remain some places still that discover his ignorance of that language, yet there had been many more, if BEDELL had not corrected them. DE DOMINIS took all this in good part from him; and did enter into such familiarity with him,

and found his assistance so useful, and indeed so necessary to himself, that he used to say, he could do nothing without him.

A passage fell out, during the interdict, that made greater noise than perhaps the importance of it could well amount to; but it was suited to the Italian genius.—There came a Jesuit to Venice, THOMAS MARIA CARAFFA; who printed a thousand Theses of Philosophy and Divinity, which he dedicated to the POPE with this extravagant inscription: *PAULO V., VICE-DEO, Christianæ Reipublicæ Monarchæ invictissimo, et Pontificæ Omnipotentæ conservatori acerrimo*:—"To PAUL V., the Vice-God, the most invincible Monarch of the Christian Commonwealth, and the most zealous Asserter of the Papal Omnipotency."—All people were amazed at the impudence of this title; but when MR. BEDELL observed that the numeral letters of the first words, "*PAULO V., VICE-DEO*," being put together, made exactly 666, the number of the Beast in the Revelation, he communicated this to P. PAULO, and the seven Divines, and they carried it to the Duke and the Senate. It was entertained almost as if it had come from heaven; and it was publicly preached over all their territories, that here was a certain evidence that the POPE was Antichrist. And it is likely that this was more promoted by them, because they found it took with the Italians, than because they could build much upon it. This flew so over Italy, that lest it should take too much among the people, the POPE caused his emissaries to give it out every where, that Antichrist was now born in Babylon, and was descended of the tribe of Dan; that he was gathering a vast army, with which he intended to come and destroy Christendom; and that therefore all Christian Princes were exhorted to prepare all their forces for resisting so great an invasion. And with this piece of false news, which was given out very confidently, the other conceit was choked.

When the reconciliation with Rome was concluded, P. PAULO wished he could have left Venice, and come over to England with MR. BEDELL; but he was so much

esteemed by the Senate for his great wisdom, and trusted with their most important secrets, that he saw it was impossible for him to obtain his *cong  *. He therefore made a shift to comply, as far as he could, with the established way of their worship ; but he had in many things particular methods, by which he in a great measure rather quieted than satisfied his conscience. In saying mass, he passed over many parts of the canon, and in particular those prayers in which that sacrifice was offered up to the honour of saints. He never prayed to saints, nor joined in those parts of the offices that went against his conscience ; and in private confessions and discourses, he took people off from those abuses, and gave them right notions of the purity of the christian religion. Thus, he hoped, he was sowing seeds that might be fruitful in another age ; and thus, he believed, he might live innocent in a church which he thought so defiled. And when one pressed him hard in this matter, and objected that he still held communion with an idolatrous church, and gave it credit by adhering outwardly to it, all the answer he made to this was, that God had not given him the spirit of LUTHER. He expressed great tenderness and concern for BEDELL, when he parted with him, and said that both he and many others would have gone over with him, if it had been in their power : but that he might never be forgotten by him, he gave him his picture, with a Hebrew Bible without points, and a little Hebrew Psalter, in which he wrote some sentences expressing his esteem and friendship for him ; and with these he gave him the invaluable Manuscript of the History of the Council of Trent, together with the History of the Interdict, and of the Inquisition. The first of these will ever be reckoned the chief pattern, after which all, who intend to succeed well in history, must copy.

When BEDELL came over, he brought along with him the ARCHBISHOP of SPALATA, and one DESPOTINE, a Physician, who could no longer bear with the corruptions of the Roman worship, and so chose a more free air. The latter lived near him in St. Edmund'sbury ; and was by his means introduced into much practice, which he main-

tained so well, that he became eminent in his profession, and continued to his death to keep up a constant correspondence with him.

MR. BEDELL had now finished one of the scenes of his life with great honour. The most considerable addition he made to his learning at Venice, was in the improvements of the Hebrew, in which he made a great progress by the assistance of R. LEO. In exchange for it, he communicated to him, that which was much more valuable, the true understanding of many passages in the Old Testament, with which that Rabbi expressed himself often to be highly satisfied. And once, in a solemn dispute, he pressed his Rabbi with so clear proofs of JESUS CHRIST being the true MESSIAS, that he, and several others of his brethren, had no other way to escape, but to say, that their Rabbins every where did expound those prophecies otherwise, according to the tradition of their fathers.

After eight years' stay, he returned to England; and, without pretending to preferment, he went immediately to his charge at St. Edmund'sbury, and there went on in his ministerial labours. He had a soul too generous to stoop to those servile compliances, which are expected by those that have the distribution of preferments. He thought that they implied an abjectness of spirit which became not a christian philosopher, much less a churchman, who ought to express a contempt of the world, and a resignation to Divine Providence. He was content to deserve preferment, and did not envy others who arrived at it.

But though he was forgotten at Court, yet SIR THOMAS JERMYN, who was a Privy-Counsellor, and Vice-Chamberlain to KING CHARLES I., and a great patron of virtue and piety, took such a liking to him, that a considerable living, in his gift, falling void, he presented him to it in the year 1615.

When he came to the BISHOP of NORWICH to take out his title to it, he demanded large fees for his institution and induction: but BEDELL would give no more than sufficient gratification for the writing, wax, and parch-

ment; and refused to pay the rest. He looked on it as Simony in the Bishop to demand more, and contrary to the command of Christ, who said, "Freely ye have received, freely give:" and he thought it a branch of Simony to sell spiritual things to spiritual persons; and since whatsoever was asked, more than a decent gratification to the servant for his pains, was asked by reason of the thing granted, he thought this unbecoming the Gospel, and a sin both in the giver and in the taker. He had observed, that nothing was more expressly contrary to all the primitive rules.

CHRYSOSTOM examined a complaint made against AUTONINE, BISHOP of EPHESUS, for exacting fees at ordination. AUTONINE died before the process was finished; but some Bishops, that had paid those fees, were degraded. Afterwards, not only all ordinations for money, but the taking money for any employment that depended upon the Bishop's gift, was most severely condemned by the Council of Chalcedon. The buyer was to lose his degree, and the seller was to be in danger of it. And after that, severe censures were every where decreed against all presents that might be made to Bishops, either before or after ordinations, or upon the account of writings, or of feasts, or any other expense that was brought in use to be made upon that occasion; and even in the Council of Trent, it was decreed, that nothing should be taken for letters dimissory, the certificates, the seals, or upon any such like ground, either by Bishops or their servants, even though it was freely offered.

Upon these accounts MR. BEDELL resolved rather to lose his presentation to the parsonage of Horingsheath, than to do that which he thought Simony; and he left the Bishop, and went home. But some days after, the Bishop sent for him, and gave him his titles, without exacting fees of him; and so he removed to that place, where he stayed twelve years, during which time he was a great honour to the church, as well as a pattern to churchmen. His habit and way of living were becoming the simplicity of his profession. He was very tender of those that were truly poor;

but was so strict in examining vagabonds, and so dexterous in discovering passes, and took such care of punishing those that went abroad with them, that they came no more to him, nor to his town. In all that time, no notice was ever taken of him, though he gave a very singular evidence of his great capacity: for being provoked by the Letters of his old acquaintance, WADSWORTH, he wrote upon the points in controversy with the Church of Rome with so much learning and judgment, and in so mild a strain, that his book had a good effect on him for whom it was intended. This book was printed, and dedicated to the late KING, while PRINCE of WALES, in the year 1624.

He was well satisfied with that which God laid in his way, and went on in the duties of his pastoral care; and was a great pattern thereof in Suffolk, in the lower degree, as he proved afterwards in Ireland, in the higher order. He laboured not as a hireling, that only raised a revenue out of his parish, and abandoned his flock, trusting them to the cheapest mercenary; nor did he satisfy himself with a slight performance of his duty, only for fashion's sake; but watched over his flock, like one that knew he was to answer to God for those souls committed to his charge. So he preached to the understandings and consciences of his parish, and catechised constantly. And, as the whole course of his own most exemplary behaviour was a continued sermon, so he was very exact in the more private affairs of his function; visiting the sick, and dealing in secret with his people, to excite or preserve in them a deep sense of religion. This he made his work; and he followed it so closely, lived so much at home, and was so little known, that when DIODATI came over to England, many years after, he could hear of him from no person that he met with; though he was acquainted with many of the clergy. He was much amazed to find that so extraordinary a man, who had been so much admired at Venice, by so good judges, was not so much as known in his own country, and so he was out of all hope of finding him out; but, by a mere accident, he met him in the streets of

London, at which there was a great deal of joy on both sides. And upon that, DIODATI presented him to MORTON, the learned and ancient BISHOP of DURESME, and told how great a value P. PAULO set on him; upon which that Bishop treated him in a very particular manner. It is true, SIR HENRY WOTTON was always his faithful friend; but his credit at Court had sunk: for he fell under necessities, having lived at Venice in an expense above his appointments. And as necessitous courtiers must grow to forget all concerns but their own; so the favour they are in lessens, when they come to need it too much.

While he was thus neglected at home, his fame was spread into IRELAND; and though he was not known either to ARCHBISHOP USHER, or to any of the Fellows of Trinity College in Dublin, yet he was chosen, by their unanimous consent, to be the Head of their College, in the year 1627; and as that worthy Primate of Ireland, together with the Fellows of the College, wrote to him, inviting him to come and accept of that Mastership, so an address was also made to the KING, praying that he would command him to go over. And that this might be the more successful, SIR HENRY WOTTON was moved to give his Majesty a true account of him, which he did in the following letter.

“May it please your most gracious MAJESTY,

“Having been informed, that certain persons have, by the good wishes of the ARCHBISHOP of ARMAGH, been directed hither, with a most humble petition unto your Majesty, that you will be pleased to make MR. WILLIAM BEDELL Governor of your College at Dublin, for the good of that society;—and I myself being required to render to your Majesty some testimony of the said WILLIAM BEDELL, who was long my Chaplain at Venice, in the time of my employment there;—I am bound in all conscience and truth to affirm of him, that, I think, hardly a fitter man could have been propounded to your Majesty in your whole kingdom, for singular erudition and piety, conformity to

the rites of the Church, and zeal to advance the cause of God; wherein his travels abroad were not obscure, in the time of the excommunication of the Venetians.

“For, may it please your Majesty to know, that this is the man whom PADRE PAULO took (I may say) into his very soul; with whom he did communicate the inwardest thoughts of his heart; from whom he professed to have received more knowledge in all divinity, both scholastical and positive, than from any in his days; of which all the passages were well known unto the King your father, of blessed memory. And so, with your Majesty’s good favour, I will end this needless office: for the general fame of his learning, his life, and christian temper, and those religious labours which himself hath dedicated to your Majesty, better describe him than I am able.

“Your Majesty’s most humble and faithful servant,

“H. WOTTON.”

But when this matter was proposed to MR. BEDELL, he expressed so much real Christianity in the answer, that I will give it in his own words, in a letter he wrote to one employed to deal with him in this matter.

“SIR,

“I have this day received both your letters, dated the 2d of this month; for answer whereof, although I could have desired so much respite as to have conferred with some of my friends, such as possibly know the condition of that place better than I do, and my insufficiencies better than my Lord Primate, yet since I perceive, by both your letters, that the matter requires a speedy answer, thus I stand.—I am married, and have three children; therefore if the place requires a single man, the business is at an end. I have no want, I thank my God, of any thing necessary for this life: I have a competent living of above a hundred pounds a year, in a good air, with a very convenient house near my friends, and a little parish, not exceeding the compass of my weak voice.

“ I have often heard, that changing seldom brings the better ; especially to those that are well. And I see well, that my wife (though resolving, as she ought, to be contented with whatsoever God shall appoint) had rather continue with her friends in her native country, than put herself to the hazard of the seas, and a foreign land, with many casualties in travel, which she perhaps, out of fear, apprehends more than there is cause.

“ All these reasons I have, if I consult with flesh and blood, which move me rather to reject this offer ; yet with all humble and dutiful thanks to my Lord Primate for his good opinion of me. On the other side, I consider the end wherefore I came into the world, and the business of a subject to our LORD JESUS CHRIST, of a Minister of the Gospel, of a good patriot, and of an honest man. If I may be of any better use to my country, to God’s Church, or of any better service to our common Master, I must close mine eyes against all private respects ; and if God call me, I must answer, ‘ Here I am.’ For my part, therefore, I will not stir one foot, or lift up my finger, for or against this motion ; but if it proceed from the LORD, that is, if those whom it concerns there, procure those, who may command me here, to send me thither, I shall obey, if it were not only to go into Ireland, but into Virginia ; yea, though I were not only to meet with troubles, dangers, and difficulties, but death itself in the performance.

“ Sir, I have as plainly as I can, showed you my mind ; desiring you, with my humble service, to represent it to my reverend good Lord, my Lord Primate. And God Almighty direct this affair to the glory of his holy name ; and have you in his merciful protection ! So I rest,

“ From Bury,
“ March 5, 1626.

“ Your loving friend,
“ WILLIAM BEDELL.”

The conclusion of this matter was, that the KING, being well informed concerning him, commanded him to undertake the charge, which he cheerfully obeyed ; and he set about the duties incumbent on him in such a manner, as showed

how well he had improved the long time of retirement he had hitherto enjoyed, and how ripely he had digested all his observations.

He had hitherto lived as if he had been fit for nothing but study ; and now, when he entered upon a more public scene, it appeared that he understood government and human life so well, that no man seemed to be more cut out for business. In the government of the College, he resolved to act nothing till he both knew the statutes of the House perfectly well, and the tempers of the people ; therefore when he went over first, he carried himself so abstractedly from all affairs, that he passed for a weak man. The zeal which appeared afterwards in him, showed, that this coldness was only the effect of his wisdom, and not of his temper. But when he found that some grew to think meanly of him, and that even USHER himself began to change his opinion of him ; when he went over to England some months after, to bring his family over to Ireland, he was thinking to resign his new preferment, and return to his benefice in Suffolk ; but the Primate wrote so kind a letter to him, that, as it made him lay down those thoughts, so it drew from him the following words, in the answer that he wrote to him :

“ Touching my return, I thankfully accept your Grace’s exhortation, advising me to have faith in God, and not consult with flesh and blood. Now I would to God, that your Grace could look into my heart, and see how little I fear lack of provision, or any outward thing in this world. My chief fear in truth was, and is, lest I should be unfit and unprofitable in the place ; in which case, if I might have an honest retreat, I think no wise man could blame me to retain it ; especially having understood that your Grace, whose authority I chiefly followed at the first, did, from your own judgment, and that of other wise men, so truly pronounce of me, that I was a weak man. Now that I have received your letters so full of encouragement, it puts some more life in me. For sure it cannot agree with that

goodness of yours, praised among all God's graces in you, by those that know you, to write one thing to me, and to speak another thing to others of me, or to go about to beguile my simplicity with words, laying in the mean while a net for my feet; especially since my weakness shall in truth redound to the blaming of your own discretion in bringing me thither."

Thus was he prevailed on to resign his benefice, and carry his family to Ireland; and then he applied himself with that vigour of mind, that was peculiar to him, to the government of the College. He corrected such abuses as he found among them; he set such rules, and saw these so well executed, that it quickly appeared how happy a choice they had made. And as he was a great promoter of learning, so he thought it his particular province to instruct the house in the principles of religion. In order to this, he catechised the youth in the College once a week, and preached once on the Sundays, though he was not obliged to it. And that he might acquaint them with a plain body of Divinity, he divided the Church-Catechism into fifty-two parts, one for every Sunday; and explained it in a way so mixed with speculative and practical matters, that his sermons were both learned lectures of divinity, and excellent exhortations to piety.

He had not stayed there above two years, when, by means of his friend, SIR THOMAS JERMYN, a patent was sent him to be BISHOP of KILMORE and ARDAGH.—And now, in the fifty-ninth year of his age, he entered upon a different course of life and employment; when it might have been thought, that the vigour of his spirits was much broken and spent. But, by his administration of his diocese, it appeared that there remained yet a vast force of spirit to carry him through those difficult undertakings to which he found himself obliged by his office; which, if it makes a man but a little lower than the angels, so that the term angel is applied to that office in Scripture, he thought it did oblige him to an angelical course of life, and to divide his time, as much as

ould consist with a body made of flesh and blood, as those glorious spirits do, between beholding the face of their Father which is in heaven, and ministering to the heirs of salvation. He considered that the Bishop's office made him the shepherd of the inferior shepherds, if not of the whole diocese; and therefore he resolved to spare himself in nothing by which he might advance the interest of religion among them: and he thought it a disingenuous thing to vouch antiquity for the authority and dignity of that function, and not at the same time to express those virtues and practices that made it so venerable of old. For the forms of Church-government must appear amiable and valuable, not so much for the arguments which learned men use concerning them, as for the real advantages that arise from them: so that he determined, with the great NAZIANZEN, "to give wings to his soul, to rescue it wholly from the world, and to dedicate it to God, as one that had got above all sensible things, and had attained to a familiarity with divine matters; that so his mind might be as an unsullied mirror, upon which he might receive and represent the impresses of God and divine things, unallied with the characters of lower objects." He saw that he should fall under envy, and meet with great oppositions; but he considered that as a sort of martyrdom for God, and resolved cheerfully to undergo whatsoever uneasy things he might suffer in the discharge of his duty.

He found his diocese under so many disorders, that there was scarcely a sound part remaining. The revenue was wasted by excessive dilapidations, and all sacred things had been exposed to sale in so sordid a manner, that it was grown to a proverb. One of his cathedrals, Ardagh, was fallen to the ground, and there was scarcely enough remaining, of both these revenues, to support a Bishop that was resolved not to supply himself by indirect and base methods. He had a very small clergy,—only seven or eight, in each diocese, of good sufficiency; but every one of these was multiplied into many parishes, they having many vicarages a-piece. Besides, being English. and his

whole diocese consisting of Irish, they were barbarians to them; nor could they perform any part of divine offices among them. But the state of his Clergy will appear best from a letter which he wrote to ARCHBISHOP LAUD concerning it; which I shall here insert.

“ RIGHT REVEREND FATHER,

“ My honourable good Lord;

“ Since my coming to this place, I have not been unmindful of your Lordship’s commands, to advertise you of the state of the Church; which I shall now the better do, because I have been about my dioceses, and can set down, out of my knowledge, what I shall relate. And shortly, to speak much ill matter in a few words, it is very miserable. The cathedral church of Ardagh, together with the Bishop’s house, is down to the ground: the church is here built, but without bell or steeple, font or chalice: the parish-churches are all, in a manner, ruined: the people, saving a few British planters, which are not the tenth part of the remnant, are obstinate recusants: the Popish Clergy are more numerous by far than we, and in full exercise of all jurisdiction ecclesiastical, by their Vicar-General and Officials; who are so confident as to excommunicate those that come to our courts, even in matrimonial causes, which affront hath been offered to myself by the Popish Primate’s Vicar-General, for which I have begun a process against him. The Primate himself lives in my parish, within two miles of my house; the Bishop in another part of my diocese. Every parish hath its priest, and some two or three a-piece; and so their mass-houses also; in some places mass is said in the churches. Friars there are, in divers places, who go about, and by their importunate begging impoverish the people; who indeed are generally very poor, as from that cause, so from their paying double tithes to their own Clergy and ours, from the dearth of corn, and the death of their cattle these late years, with the contributions to their soldiers and their agents, and, (which they forget not to reckon, among other causes,) the oppression of the Court Ecclesiastical.

which, in very truth, My Lord, I cannot excuse, and do seek to reform. For our own, there are seven or eight Ministers, in each diocese, of good sufficiency, and (which is no small cause of the continuance of the people in Popery still,) English, which have not the tongue of the people, nor can perform any divine offices, or converse with them. Even the clerkships themselves are in like manner conferred upon the English, and sometimes two, or three, or more, upon one man; and are ordinarily bought and sold, or let to farm. His Majesty is now, with the greatest part of this country, as to their hearts and consciences, King only at the Pope's discretion.

“ Kilmore, “ WILL. KILMORE and ARDAGH.”
 “ April 1, 1630.

Here was a melancholy prospect to so good a mind; enough to have disheartened him quite, if he had not had a proportioned degree of courage to support him.

After he had recovered somewhat of the spoils made by his predecessor, and put himself into a capacity to subsist, he went about the reforming of abuses. The first he undertook was that of pluralities; by which one man had a care of souls in so many different places, that it was not possible to discharge his duty to them, nor to perform the vows, made at his ordination, of feeding and instructing the flock committed to his care. And though most of the pluralists did mind all their parishes alike, that is, neglected all equally; yet he thought this an abuse contrary both to the nature of ecclesiastical functions, and to the obligations which the care of souls imported, and to those solemn vows which churchmen made at the altar when ordained: and he knew well that this corruption was no sooner observed to have crept into the christian church, than it was condemned at the fourth General Council of Chalcedon. He thought it a vain and an impudent thing for a man to pretend, that he answered the obligation of so sacred a trust and vow, by hiring some Curate to perform offices; since the obligation was personal, and the watching over souls had so many things involved in it, besides officiating

according to the rubric, that it drew this severe reflection from a witty man, "That when such betrayers and abandoners of that trust, which CHRIST purchased with his own blood, found good and faithful Curates that performed worthily the obligations of the pastoral care, the incumbent should be saved by proxy, but be damned in person." Therefore the Bishop gathered a meeting of his Clergy, and laid before them, both out of Scripture and antiquity, the institution, nature, and duties of the ministerial employment; and exhorted them to reform that intolerable abuse, which, as it brought a heavy scandal on the church, and gave their adversaries great advantages, so it must very much endanger both their own souls, and the souls of their flocks. And to let them see that he would not lay a heavy burden on them, in which he would not bear his own share, he resolved to part with one of his own bishoprics. For though Ardagh was considered as a ruined see, and had long gone as an accessory to Kilmore; yet, since they were really two different sees, he thought he could not decently oblige his Clergy to renounce their pluralities, unless he set them an example, and renounced his own. Even after he had been at a considerable charge in recovering the patrimony of Ardagh, and though he was sufficiently able to discharge the duty of both sees, (they being contiguous and small,) and though the revenue of both did not exceed a competency, yet he would not seem to be guilty of that which he so severely condemned in others; and therefore he resigned Ardagh to DR. RICHARDSON. The authority of this example, and the efficacy of his discourse, made such an impression on his Clergy, that they all renounced their pluralities.

This concurrence from his Clergy in so sensible a point, was a great encouragement to go on in his other designs. There seemed to be a finger of God in it, for he had no authority to compel them; and he had managed the minds of his Clergy so gently in this matter, that their compliance was not extorted, but free. One only was excepted, and he, being Dean, exchanged his deanery with another; for

he was ashamed to live in the diocese where he would not submit to such terms, after both the BISHOP himself and all his Clergy had agreed to them. The opposition given him by the Dean, his sense of that matter, and his carriage in it, will appear from the following letter, which he wrote concerning it to the PRIMATE.

“ MOST REVEREND FATHER,

“ My honourable good Lord ;

“ I cannot easily express what contentment I received at my late being with your Grace at Termonseckin. There had nothing happened to me, I will not say, since I came into Ireland, but, as far as I can call to remembrance, in my whole life, which did so much affect me in this kind, as the hazard of your good opinion. For, loving and honouring you in truth, without any private interest, and receiving so unlooked-for a blow from your own hand, which should have tenderly applied some remedy to me, when smitten by others, I had not present the defences of reason and grace. And although I knew it to be a fault in myself, since, in the performance of our duties, the judgment of our Master, even alone, ought to suffice us ; yet I could not be so much master of mine affections as to cast out this weakness. But blessed be God, who at my being with you refreshed my spirit by your kind renewing and confirming of your love to me ; and all humble thanks to you, who gave me place to make my defence, and took upon you the cognizance of my innocency. And as for mine accuser, whose hatred I have incurred only by not giving way to his covetous desire of heaping living upon living, I am glad, and do give God thanks, that this malignity, which awhile masked itself in the pretence of friendship, hath at last discovered itself by public opposition. It hath not been, and I hope it shall not be, in his power to hurt me ; he hath rather shamed himself. And, although his high heart cannot give his tongue leave to acknowledge his folly, his understanding is not so weak and blind as not to see it. I could be well content to leave

him to taste the fruit of it also, without being further troublesome to your Grace, save that I do not despair but your Grace's authority will pull him out of the snare of Satan, whose instrument he hath been to cross the work of God.

“Your Grace's letters of August 23d were not delivered to me till the 29th. In the mean space, what effect those that accompanied them had with MR. DEAN, you shall perceive by the enclosed, which were sent me the 28th, the evening before our communion. I answered them the next morning, as is here annexed. As I was at the LORD's-table, beginning the service of the Communion before the sermon, he came in ; and after the sermon was done, those that communicated not being departed, he stood forth and spake to this purpose :—“That whereas the Book of Common Prayer requires, that, before the LORD's-Supper, if there be any variance or breach of charity, there should be reconciliation, this was much more requisite between Ministers : and because they all knew that there had been some difference between me and him, he did profess, that he bore me no malice nor hatred, and if he had offended me in any thing, he was sorry.” I answered, “That he had good reason to be sorry, considering how he had behaved himself : for my part, I bore him no malice, and, if it were in my power, would not make so much as his finger ache. Grieved I had been that he, in whom I knew there were many good parts, would become an instrument to oppose the work of God, which I was assured he had called me to.” This was all that passed. He offered himself to the LORD's board, and I gave him the Communion. After dinner he preached out of 1 *John* iv. 21 : “And this commandment have we from him, that he that loveth God, love his brother also.” When we came out of the church, DR. SHERIDAN delivered me your Grace's letters. And thus MR. DEAN thinks he hath healed all, as you may perceive by his next letters of August 30 ; only he labours about Kildromfarten : whereabouts I proposed to have spoken with your Grace at my being with you ; but I know

not how, it came not to my mind ;—whether it be that the soul, as well as the body, after some travel easily falleth to rest ; or else God would have it reserved perhaps to a more seasonable time.

“ It is now above a twelvemonth (the day, in many respects, I may well wish may not be reckoned with the days of the year,) since your Grace, as it were, delivered to me with your own hands, MR. CRIAN, a converted Friar. To him I offered myself as largely as my ability would extend ; though I had already, at your Grace’s commendation, received MR. DUNSTERVILLE to be in my house, with the allowance of twenty pounds per annum. The next day before my departing, MR. HILTON made a motion to me, that whereas he had in his hands sufficient to make the benefice of Kildromfarten void, if I would bestow it upon MR. DEAN, he would do so ; otherwise it should remain *in statu*. I answered with profession of my love and good opinion of MR. DEAN, whereof I showed the reasons. I added, I did not know the place nor the people ; but if they were mere Irish, I did not see how MR. DEAN could discharge the duty of a Minister to them. This motion was seconded by your Grace ; but so, as I easily conceived, that being solicited by your old servant, you could do no less than you did. MR. DEAN afterwards pressed me, that if, without my concurrence, your Grace would confer that living upon him, I would not be against it ; which I promised, but heard no more of it till about April last. In the mean while, the benefice next unto that which MR. DUNSTERVILLE was already possessed of, falling void, whose former benefice was unable, he said, to maintain him, chiefly he promising residence, I united it to his former, and dismissed him to go to his cure ; wherein how carelessly he hath behaved, I forbear to relate. To return to MR. DEAN. About the middle of April, he brought me a presentation to Kildromfarten under the broad seal. I could do no less than signify it to the Incumbent, who came to me, and maintained his title, requiring me not to admit. Whereupon I returned the presentation, indorsing

the reason of my refusal ; and being then occasioned to write to the Lords Justices, I signified what I thought of these pluralities, in a time when we are so far over-matched in number by the adverse part. This passed on till the visitation ; wherein MR. DEAN showed himself in his colours. When the Vicar of Kildromfarten was called, he said he was Vicar, but would exhibit no title. Afterwards, the Curate, MR. SMITH, signified to me, that his stipend was unpaid ; and he feared it would be still in the contention of two Incumbents. Upon these and other reasons, I sequestered the profits, which I have heard, by a Simonaical compact betwixt them, should be for this year the former Incumbent's. Neither did MR. DEAN write or speak a word to me hereabout, till the day before the Communion, in the enclosed. That very morning I was certified that he proposed to appeal to your Grace, which made me in answer to his next to add, *Quod facias, fac citius*.

“ Here I beseech your Grace to give me leave to speak freely touching this matter ; so much the rather, because it is the only root of all MR. DEAN's despite against me. I think that of all the diseases of the Church in these times, next to that of the corruption of our courts, this of pluralities is the most deadly and pestilent ; especially when those are instituted into charges ecclesiastical, who, were they never so willing, yet for want of the language of the people, are unable to discharge them. Concerning this very point, I know your Grace remembers the propositions of the learned and zealous BISHOP of LINCOLN before POPE INNOCENT. I will not add the confession of our adversaries themselves in the Council of Trent, nor the judgment of that good Father, the Author of the History thereof, touching non-residency. Let the thing itself speak. Whence flow the ignorance of the people, the neglect of God's worship, and defrauding the poor of the remains of dedicate things, the ruin of the mansion-houses of the Ministers, the desolation of churches, the swallowing up of parishes by the farmers of them, but from this fountain ? There may be cause, no doubt, why sometimes, in some place,

and to some man, many churches may be committed ; but now that there are, besides the titular Primate and Bishop, of Priests in the dioceses of Kilmore and Ardagh, sixty-six,—of Ministers and Curates but thirty-two,—in this so great odds as the adversaries have of us in number, (to omit the advantage of the language, the possession of people's hearts, and the countenance of the nobility and gentry,) is it a time to commit many churches to one man ? Him I will not undervalue : but what hath he done in the parishes already committed to him, for the instruction of the Irish, that we should commit another unto him ? He that cannot perform his duty to one without a helper, or to that little part of it whose tongue he hath, is he sufficient to do it to three ? No ; it is the wages which are sought, not the work. And yet with the means he hath already, that good man his predecessor maintained a wife and a family ; and cannot he in his solitary life defray himself ? Well, if there can none be found fit to discharge the duty, let him have the wages to better his maintenance. But when your Grace assureth us we shall lack no men,—when there is, besides MR. CRIAN, (whom DR. SHERIDAN hath heard preach as a friar in that very place ; which I account would be more to GOD's glory, if now he should plant the truth, which before he endeavoured to root out,) MR. NUGENT, who offereth himself, in an honest and discreet letter lately written to me,—when we have sundry in the College, and two trained up at the Irish lecture, one whereof hath translated your Grace's Catechism into Irish, besides MR. DUNCAN and others ;—with what colour can we pass by these, and suffer him to fatten himself with the blood of GOD's people ? Pardon me, I beseech your Grace, when I say *We* : I mean not to prescribe any thing to you ; myself, I hope, shall never do it. And so long as this is the cause of MR. DEAN's wrath against me, whether I suffer by his pen or his tongue, I shall rejoice, as suffering for righteousness' sake. And, sith himself in his last letter excuses my intent, I do submit my actions, after GOD, to

your Grace's censure; ready to make him satisfaction, if in any thing, in word or deed, I have wronged him.

"Since my being with you, here was with me MR. BRADY, bringing with him the resignation of the benefice of Mullagh, which I had conferred upon MR. DUNSTERVILLE, and united to his former^e of Moybolke. He brought with him letters from my LORD of CORK, and SIR WILLIAM PARSONS, to whom he is allied. But examining him, I found him (besides a very raw Divine) unable to read the Irish; and therefore excused myself to the Lords from admitting him. A few days after, viz. the 10th of this month, here was with me MR. DUNSTERVILLE himself, who signified unto me that he had revoked his former resignation. Thus he plays fast and loose, and most unconscionably neglects his duty. *Omnes quæ sua sunt quæerunt*. Indeed I doubted his resignation was not good; in as much as he retained still the former benefice, whereunto this was united. Now I see clearly that there was a compact between him and MR. BRADY, that if the second could not be admitted, he should resume his benefice again.

"Ashamed I am to be thus tedious. But I hope you will pardon me, sith you required, and I promised, to write often; and having now had opportunity to convey my letters, this must serve instead of many: concluding with mine and my wife's humble service to your Grace and MRS. USHER, and thanks for my kind entertainment, I desire the blessing of your prayers, and remain always

"Kilmore,
"Sept. 18, 1630.

"Your Grace's humble servant,
"WILL. KILMORE and ARDAGH."

The condemning of pluralities was but half of his project. The next part was to oblige his Clergy to reside in their parishes; but in this he met with a great difficulty. KING JAMES, upon the last reduction of Ulster, after TYRONE's rebellion, had ordered glebe-lands to be assigned to all the Clergy; and they were obliged to build houses upon them, within a limited time. But, in assigning

these glebe-lands, the commissioners had taken no care of the conveniencies of the Clergy : for in many places these lands were not in the parish, and often they lay not altogether, but were divided in parcels. So he found his Clergy were in a strait. For if they built houses upon these glebe-lands, they would be thereby forced to live out of their parishes ; and it was very inconvenient for them to have their houses remote from their lands. In order to remedy this, the Bishop, having lands in every parish assigned him, resolved to make an exchange with them, for more convenient portions of equal value. And that the exchange might be made upon a just estimate, so that neither the Bishop nor the inferior Clergy might suffer, he procured a commission from the Lord-Lieutenant for some to examine and settle that matter ; which was at last brought to a conclusion with so universal a satisfaction to his whole diocese, that, since the thing could not be finally determined without a great seal from the King, confirming all that was done, there was one sent over, in the name of them all, to obtain it.

The Lord-Lieutenant at this time was SIR THOMAS WENTWORTH, afterwards EARL of STRAFFORD. At his first coming over to Ireland, he was possessed with prejudices against the Bishop, upon the account of a petition sent up by the county of Cavan, to which the Bishop had set his hand, in which some complaints were made, and some regulations were proposed for the army. This was thought an insolent attempt, and a matter of ill example ; so that STRAFFORD, who was severe in his administration, was highly displeased with him : and when any commission or order was brought to him, in which he found his name, he dashed it out with his own pen ; and expressed great indignation against him. When the Bishop understood this, he was not much moved at it, knowing his own innocence ; but he took prudent methods to overcome his displeasure. He did not go to Dublin, upon his coming over, as all the other Bishops did, to congratulate his coming to the government : but he wrote a full account of

that matter to his constant friend, SIR THOMAS JERMYN, who managed it with so much zeal, that letters were sent to the Deputy from the Court, by which he was so mollified towards the Bishop, that he, going to congratulate, was well received, and was ever afterwards treated by him with a very particular kindness. So this storm went over, which many thought would have ended in imprisonment, if not in deprivation. Yet how much soever that petition was mistaken, he made it appear very plain, that he did not design the putting down of the army: for he saw too evidently the danger they were in from Popery, to think he could be long safe without it. But a letter, which contains his vindication from that aspersion, carries in it likewise such a representation of the state of the popish interest then in Ireland, and of their numbers, their tempers, and their principles, that I will set it down. It was written to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

“RIGHT HONOURABLE,

My very good Lord;

“I have been advertised from an honourable friend in England, that I am accused to his Majesty to have opposed his service; and that my hand, with that of two other Bishops only, was to a writing touching the money to be levied on the Papists for maintenance of the men of war. Indeed, if I should have had such an intention, this had been not only to oppose the service of his Majesty, but to expose, with the public peace, mine own neck to the skeans of Romish cut-throats. I who knew that, in this kingdom of his Majesty's, the Pope hath another kingdom far greater in number, and, as I have heretofore signified to the Lords Justices and Council, constantly guided and directed by the order of the new congregation lately erected at Rome, transmitted by the means of the Pope's Nuncios residing at Brussels;—I who knew that the Pope hath here a Clergy, if I may guess by my own diocese, double in number to us, the heads whereof are by corporal oath bound to him, to maintain him and his regalities *contra omnem hominem*,

and to execute his mandates to the uttermost of their forces: which accordingly they do, styling themselves in print, "*Ego N. Dei et Apostolicæ Sedis gratiâ Episcopus Fermien. et Ossorien.*;"—I who knew that there is in the kingdom, for the moulding of the people to the Pope's obedience, a rabble of irregular Regulars, commonly younger brothers of good houses, who are grown to that insolency, as to advance themselves to be members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy in better ranks than priests;—I who knew that his Holiness hath erected a new University in Dublin, to confront his Majesty's College there, and to breed the youth of the kingdom to his devotion, of which University one PAUL HARRIS styleth himself in print to be Dean;—I who knew, and have given advertisement to the state, that these Regulars dare erect new friaries in the country, since the dissolving of those in the city, and that they have brought the people to such a sottish senselessness, as that they care not to learn the commandments as God himself spake and wrote them, but flock in great numbers to the preaching of new superstitious and detestable doctrines, such as their own priests are ashamed of, at all which times they levy collections, three, four, five, or six pounds at a sermon;—I who knew that those Regulars, and this Clergy, have at a general meeting, or synod, as themselves style it, decreed that it is not lawful to take an oath of allegiance; and, if they be constant to their own doctrine, do account his Majesty in their hearts to be King at the Pope's discretion;—in this state of this kingdom, to think the bridle of the army may be taken away, would be the thought not of a *brain-sick*, but of a *brain-less* man.

<p>“ The Day of our deliverance from the popish Powder Plot, Anno 1663.</p>	<p>“ Your Lordship's “ in all duty, “ WILL. KILMORE.”</p>
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By his cutting off pluralities, there fell to be many vacancies in his diocese, so the care he took to fill these comes to be considered in the next place. He was very strict in his examinations before he gave orders to any. He

went over the Articles of the Church of Ireland so particularly, that one who was present at the ordination of him that was afterwards his Archdeacon, MR. THOMAS PRICE, reported, that though he was one of the senior Fellows of the College of Dublin, when the Bishop was Provost, yet his examination lasted two full hours. And when he had ended any examination, which was always done in the presence of his Clergy, he desired every Clergyman present to examine the person further, if they thought any material thing was omitted by him; by which a fuller discovery of his temper and sufficiency might be made. When all was ended, he made all his Clergy give their approbation, before he would proceed to ordination: for he would never assume that singly to himself, nor take the load of it wholly on his own soul. He took also great care to be well informed of the religious qualities of those he ordained, as well as satisfied himself by his examination of their capacity and knowledge. He had always a considerable number of his Clergy assisting him at his ordinations; and he always preached and administered the Sacrament on those occasions himself. And he never ordained one a Presbyter, till he had been at least a year a Deacon, that so he might have a good account of his behaviour in that lower degree, before he raised him higher. He looked upon that power of ordination as the most sacred of a Bishop's trust, and that in which the laws of the land had laid no sort of imposition on them; so that this was entirely in their hands, and therefore, he thought, they had so much the more to answer for to God on that account: and he weighed carefully the importance of those words, "Lay hands suddenly on no man, and be not a partaker of other men's sins." Therefore he used all the precaution that was possible in so important an affair. He was never prevailed on by any recommendations or importunities to ordain any; as if orders had been a sort of freedom in a company, by which a man was to be enabled to hold as great a portion of the ecclesiastical revenue as he could compass. Nor would he ever ordain any without a title to

a particular flock. For he thought a title to a maintenance was not enough, as if the church should only take care that none in orders might be in want; but he saw the abuses of those false titles, and of the vagrant priests that went about as journeymen, plying for work, to the great reproach of that sacred employment. And in this he also followed the rule set by the Fourth General Council, which carried this matter so high, as to annul all orders that were given without a particular designation of the place where the person was to serve. For he made the primitive times his standard; and resolved to come as near it as he could, considering the corruption of the age in which he lived. He remembered well the grounds he went on, when he refused to pay fees for the title to his benefice in Suffolk; and therefore took care that those who were ordained by him, or had titles to benefices from him, might be put to no charge: for he wrote all the instruments himself, and delivered them to the persons to whom they belonged, out of his own hands; and adjured them, in a very solemn manner, to give nothing to any of his servants. And, that he might hinder it all that was possible, he waited on them always on those occasions to the gate of his house; that so he might be sure that they should not give any gratification to his servants. He thought it lay on him to pay them such convenient wages as became them; and not to let his Clergy be burdened with his servants. And indeed the abuses in that were grown to such a pitch, that it was necessary to correct them in so exemplary a manner.

His next care was to observe the behaviour of his Clergy. He knew that the lives of churchmen had generally much more efficacy than their sermons, or other labours, could have; and so he set himself much to watch the manners of his priests, and was very sensibly touched, when an Irishman said once to him, in open court, "That the King's priests were as bad as the Pope's priests." These were so grossly ignorant, and so openly scandalous, both for drunkenness, and all sorts of lewdness, that this was indeed a very heavy reproach. Yet he was no rude nor remorseless

reformer, but considered what the times could bear. He had great tenderness for the weakness of his Clergy, when he saw reason to think otherwise well of them: and he helped them out of their troubles, with the care and compassion of a father.

One of his Clergy held two livings; but had been cozened, by a gentleman of quality, to farm them to him for less than either of them was worth. He acquainted the Bishop with this; who, upon that, wrote very civilly, and yet as became a Bishop, to the gentleman, persuading him to give up the bargain: but having received a sullen and haughty answer from him, he made the Minister resign up both to him, (for they belonged to his gift,) and he provided him with another benefice, and put two other worthy men in these two churches; and so he put an end to the gentleman's fraudulent bargain, and to the churchman's plurality.

He never gave a benefice to any, without obliging them by oath to perpetual and personal residence, and that they should never hold any other benefice with that. So, when one BUCHANAN was recommended to him, and found by him to be well qualified, he offered him a collation to a benefice; but when BUCHANAN saw that he was to be bound to residence, and not to hold another benefice, he being already possessed of one, with which he resolved not to part, would not accept of it on those terms. And the Bishop was not to be prevailed upon to dispense with it, though he liked this man so much the better, because he was akin to the great BUCHANAN, whose Paraphrase of the Psalms he loved beyond all other Latin Poetry.

The Latin form of his Collations concluded thus: "Obtesting you in the LORD, and enjoining you, by virtue of that obedience which you owe to the great Shepherd, that you will diligently feed his flock committed to your care, which he purchased with his own blood; that you instruct them in the catholic faith, and perform divine offices in a tongue understood by the people; and, above all things, that you show yourself a pattern to believers in good works,

so that the adversaries may be put to shame, when they find nothing for which they can reproach you."

He put all the instruments in one; whereas devices had been found out, for the increase of fees, to divide these into several writings. Nor was he content to write this all with his own hand, but sometimes he gave induction likewise to his Clergy; for he thought none of these offices were below a Bishop, and he was ready to ease them of charge as far as he could. He had, by his zeal and earnest endeavours, prevailed with all his Presbyters to reside in their parishes; one only excepted, whose name was JOHNSTON. He was of a mean education, yet he had very quick parts; but they lay more to the mechanical than to the spiritual architecture: for the EARL of STAFFORD used him for an engineer, and gave him the management of some great buildings which he was raising in the county of Wicklow. But the Bishop finding that the man had a very mercurial wit, and a great capacity, resolved to set him to work, that so he might not be wholly useless to the church; and therefore he proposed to him the composing of a universal character, that might be equally well understood by all nations; and he showed him, that since there was already a universal mathematical character received, both for arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy, the other was not impossible to be done. JOHNSTON undertook it readily, and the Bishop drew for him a scheme of the whole work, which he brought to such perfection, that he put it under the press; but the rebellion prevented his finishing it.

After the Bishop had been for many years carrying on the reformation of his diocese, he resolved to hold a Synod of all his Clergy, and to establish some rules for the better government of the flock committed to him. He appointed that a Synod should be held, thereafter, once a year, in the second week of September; that, in the Bishop's absence, his Vicar-General, if he was a priest, or his Archdeacon, should preside; and that no Vicar should be constituted, after that, unless he were in orders, and should hold his

place only during the Bishop's pleasure. He revived the ancient custom of Rural Deans; and appointed, that there should be three for the three divisions of his diocese, who should be chosen by the clergy, and should have an inspection into their department, and make report to the Bishop of what passed among them, and transmit the Bishop's orders to them;—that once a month the Clergy of each division should meet, and preach by turns, without long prayers or preambles;—and that no excommunication should be made but by the Bishop in person, with the assistance of such of his Clergy as should be present. The rest related to some things of less importance, which required amendment. When the news of this was carried to Dublin, some said it was an illegal assembly, and that his presuming to make canons was against law; so that it was expected he would be brought up as a delinquent, and censured in the Star-Chamber, or High-Commission-Court. But others looked on what he had done, as nothing but the necessary discharge of his episcopal function: and it seemed strange, if some rules laid down by common consent, for the better government of the diocese, should have furnished matter for an accusation or censure. His Arch-deacon, who was afterwards Archbishop of Cashel, gave such an account of this matter to the state, that nothing followed upon it. The Bishop had indeed prepared such a justification of himself, as would have vindicated him fully before equitable judges, if he had been questioned for it. ARCHBISHOP USHER, who knew well how much he could say for himself upon this head, advised those who moved that he might be brought up upon it, to let him alone, lest he should be thereby provoked to say more for himself than any of his accusers could say against him.

When he made his visitations, he always preached himself, and administered the sacrament; and the business of his visitation was, what it ought truly to be, to observe the state of his diocese, and to give good instructions both to Clergy and Laity. The visitations in Ireland had been matter of great pomp and much luxury, which lay heavy

on the inferior Clergy. Some slight inquiries were made, and those chiefly for form's-sake; and indeed nothing was so much minded, as that which was the reproach of them,—the fees, which were exacted to such an intolerable degree, that they were a heavy grievance to the Clergy. And as the Bishop's visitation came about every year; so, every third year, the Archbishop made his metropolitan visitation, and every seventh year the King's visitation went round: and in all these, as they were then managed, nothing seemed to be so much aimed at, as how to squeeze and oppress the Clergy, who were glad to purchase their peace, by paying all that was imposed on them by those severe exactors. These fees at visitations were not known in the primitive times; in which the Bishop had the whole stock of the Church in his hands to defray what expense necessarily fell on him, or his Church. It is true, when the Metropolitan, with other Bishops, came and ordained the Bishop at his see, it was but reasonable that their expenses should be discharged, and these came to be rated at a certain sum; and when these grew unreasonably high, the Emperors reduced them to a certain proportion, according to the revenues of the sees. But when the Bishops and the inferior Clergy came to have distinct properties, then the Bishops exacted of their Clergy that which other vassals owed by their tenure to the Lord of the Fee, which was the bearing the expense of their progress. When they began first to demand those subsidies from their Clergy, that practice was condemned; and provision was made, that in case a Bishop was so poor that he could not bear the charge to which his visitation put him, he should be supplied by the richer Bishops about him, but not prey upon his Clergy. And both CHARLES the GREAT, and his son LOUIS, took care to see this executed. Yet this abuse was still kept up; so that afterwards, instead of putting it quite down, it was only regulated, that it might not exceed such a proportion: but that was not observed; so that an arbitrary tax was in many places levied upon the Clergy. But our Bishop reformed all these excesses, and took nothing but what was

by law and custom established: and that was employed in entertaining the Clergy; and when there was any overplus, he sent it always to the prisons, for the relief of the poor.

At his visitation, he made all his Clergy sit with him, and be covered, whenever he himself was covered. For he did not approve of the state in which others of his order made their visitations; nor of the distance to which they obliged their Clergy. And he had that canon often in his mouth, "That a presbyter ought not to be let stand, after the Bishop was set." He was much troubled at another abuse, which was, that when the metropolitan and regal visitations went round, a writ was served on the Bishops, suspending their jurisdiction for that year: and when this was first brought to him, he received it with great indignation, which was increased by two clauses in the writ. By the one it was asserted, "that in the year of the Metropolitan's visitation, the whole and entire jurisdiction of the diocese belonged to him." The other was the reason given for it, "Because of the great danger of the souls of the people." Whereas, the danger of souls arises from that suspension of the Bishop's pastoral power; since during that year he either could not do the duty of a Bishop, or, if he would exercise it, he must either purchase a delegation to act as the Archbishop's deputy, and that could not be had without paying for it, or be liable to a suit in the Prerogative Court. He knew that the Archbishop's power over Bishops was not founded on divine or apostolical right, but on ecclesiastical canons, and was only a matter of order; and that therefore the Archbishop had no authority to come and invade his pastoral office, and suspend him for a year. These were some of the worst of the abuses that the canonists had introduced in the latter ages; by which they had broken the episcopal authority, and had made way for vesting the whole power of the church in the Pope. He laid those things often before **ARCHBISHOP USHER**, and pressed him earnestly to set himself to the reforming of them; since they were acted in his name, and by virtue of his authority deputed to his

Chancellor, and to the other officers of the court called the Spiritual Court.—No man was more sensible of those abuses than USHER was; no man knew the beginning and progress of them better, nor was more touched with the ill effects of them; and, together with his vast learning, no man had a better soul, and a more apostolical mind. In his conversation he expressed the true simplicity of a Christian: for passion, pride, self-will, or the love of the world, seemed not to be so much as in his nature; so that he had all the innocence of the dove in him. He had a way of gaining people's hearts, and of touching their consciences, that looked like somewhat of the apostolical age revived. He spent much of his time in those two best exercises, secret prayer, and dealing with other people's consciences, either in his sermons or private discourses; and what remained he dedicated to his studies, in which those many volumes that came from him showed a most amazing diligence and exactness: so that he was certainly one of the greatest and best men that the age, or perhaps the world, has produced. But he was not made for the governing part of his function. He had too gentle a soul to manage that rough work of reforming abuses; and therefore he left things as he found them. He hoped a time of reformation would come. He saw the necessity of cutting off many abuses; and confessed, that the tolerating of those abominable corruptions, which the canonists had brought in, was such a stain upon our church, that he apprehended it would bring a curse and ruin upon the whole constitution. But though he prayed for a more favourable conjuncture, and would have concurred in a joint reformation of these things very heartily, yet he did not bestir himself, suitably to the obligations that lay on him, for carrying it on: and it is very likely that this sat heavy on his thoughts when he came to die; for he prayed often, and with great humility, that God would forgive his sins of omission, and his failings in his duty. Those that upon all other accounts loved and admired him, lamented this defect in him; which was the only alloy that seemed left, and without

which he would have been held, perhaps, in more veneration than was fitting. His physician, DR. BOOTIUS, who was a Dutchman, said truly of him, "If our Primate of Armagh were as exact a disciplinarian, as he is eminent in searching antiquity, defending the truth, and preaching the Gospel, he might without doubt deserve to be made the chief churchman of Christendom." Yet though ARCHBISHOP USHER did not much himself, he had a singular esteem for that vigour of mind, which our Bishop expressed in the reforming of these matters.

And now I come to the next instance of his pastoral care, which made more noise, and met with more opposition, than any of the former.—He found that his Court, which sat in his name, was an entire abuse. It was managed by a Chancellor, who had bought his place from his predecessor, and so he thought he had a right to all the profits that he could raise out of it; and the whole business of the Court seemed to be nothing but extortion and oppression. For it is an old observation, that men who buy justice will also sell it. Bribes went about almost barefaced; and the exchange they made of penance for money was the worst sort of simony, being in effect the very same abuse that gave the world such a scandal when it was so indecently practised in the Church of Rome, and opened the way to the Reformation: for the selling of indulgences is really but a commutation of penance. He found the officers of the Court made it their business to draw people into trouble by vexatious suits, and to hold them so long in it, that for three-pence-worth of the tithe of turf, they would be put to five pounds' charge. And the most solemn and sacred of all the Church-censures, excommunication, was performed in so base a manner, that all regard to it, as it was a spiritual censure, was lost; and the effects it had in law made it be cried out against, as a most intolerable piece of tyranny. And of all this the good Primate was so sensible, that he gives this sad account of the venality of all sacred things, in a letter to the ARCHBISHOP of CANTERBURY: "As for the general state of things here,

they are so desperate, that I am afraid to write any thing thereof. Some of the adverse part have asked me the question, where I have heard or read before, that religion and men's souls should be set to sale, after this manner? Unto whom I could reply nothing, but that I had read in MANTUAN, that there was another place in the world where *Cælum est venale, Deusque*:—‘Both heaven and GOD himself are set to sale.’” But our Bishop thought it not enough to lament this; he resolved to do what in him lay to correct these abuses, and to go and sit and judge in his own Courts himself. He carried a competent number of his Clergy with him, who sat about him, and there he heard causes, and by their advice he gave sentence. By this means so many causes were dismissed, and such a change was wrought in the whole proceedings of the Court, that, instead of being any more a grievance to the country, none were now grieved by it but the Chancellor, and the other officers of the Court, who saw that their trade was sunk, and their profits were falling, and were already displeased with the Bishop, for writing the titles to benefices himself, and taking that part of their gain out of their hands. Therefore the Lay-Chancellor brought a suit against the Bishop into Chancery, for invading his office. The matter was now a common cause; the other Bishops were glad at this step our Bishop had made, encouraged him to go on resolutely in it, and assured him they would stand by him; and they confessed they were but Half-Bishops, till they could recover their authority out of the hands of their Chancellors. But, on the other hand, all the Chancellors and Registers of Ireland combined together, who saw this struck at those places which they had bought. The Bishop desired that he might be suffered to plead his own cause himself; but that was denied him. But he drew the argument that his Counsel made for him; for it being the first suit that ever was of that sort, he was more capable of composing his defence than his Counsel could be.

He went upon these grounds:—That one of the most

essential parts of a Bishop's duty was to govern his flock, and to inflict spiritual censures on obstinate offenders; that a Bishop could no more delegate this power to a layman, than he could delegate a power to baptize or ordain, since excommunication, and other censures, were a suspension of the rights of baptism and orders, and therefore the judging of these things could only belong to him that had the power to give them; and that the delegating of that power was a thing null of itself. He showed, that feeding the flock was inseparable from a Bishop; and that no delegation he could make, could take that power from himself, since all the effect it could have was, to make another his deputy in his absence. Next, he showed how it had been ever looked on as a necessary part of the Bishop's duty, to examine and censure the scandals of his Clergy and Laity, in ancient and modern times: that the Roman Emperors had by many laws supported the credit and authority of these Courts; that since the practices of the Court of Rome had brought in such a variety of rules, for covering the corruptions which they intended to support, that which is in itself a plain and simple thing was made very intricate; so that the canon-law was become a great study, and, upon this account, Bishops had taken Civilians and Canonists to be their assistants in those Courts; but that this could be for no other end, but only to inform them in points of law, or to hear and prepare matters for them: for the giving sentence, as it is done in the Bishop's name, so it is really his office; and is that for which he is accountable both to God and man. And since the law made those to be the Bishops' Courts, and since the King had by patent confirmed that authority, which was lodged in him by his office, of governing those Courts, he thought all delegations, that were exclusive of the Bishop, ought to be declared void.

The Reader will perhaps judge better of the force of this argument than the LORD CHANCELLOR of Ireland, BOLTON, did, who confirmed the Chancellor's right, and gave him a hundred pounds as costs of the Bishop. But

“ MOST REVEREND FATHER,

“ My honourable good Lord,

“ Since it pleased God to call me to this place in this church, what my intentions have been to the discharge of my duty, he best knows. But I have met with many impediments and discouragements; and chiefly from those of mine own profession in religion. Concerning MR. HOILE, I acquainted your Grace. SIR EDWARD BAGSHAW, SIR FRANCIS HAMILTON, MR. WILLIAM FLEMMING, and divers more, have been, and yet are, pulling from the rights of my church. But all these have been light in respect of the dealing of some others, professing me kindness, by whom I have been blazed as a Papist, an Equivocator, a niggardly Housekeeper, an Usurer. And to make up all, it has been reported that I compared your Grace’s preaching to one MR. WHISKINS’S, MR. CREIGHTON’S, and MR. BAXTER’S, and preferred them; and that you found yourself deceived in me. These things have been reported at Dublin; and some of the best affected of mine own diocese were induced hereby to bewail with tears the misery of the church. Some of the Clergy also, it was said, were looking about how they might remove themselves out of this country.

“ Omitting all the rest, I cannot but touch upon the last;—preferring others to your Grace’s preaching. Thus it was. MR. DUNSTERVILLE acquainted me with his purpose to preach out of *Prov. xx. 6*, ‘ But a faithful man who can find.’ From which he said, the doctrine he meant to raise was this, That faith is a rare gift of God. I told him, I thought he mistook the meaning of the text, and wished him to choose longer texts, and not bring his discourses to a word or two of Scripture; but rather to declare those of the HOLY GHOST. He said your Grace did so sometimes. I answered, there might be just cause; but I thought you did not ordinarily. As for those men, MR. WHISKINS, and the rest, I never heard any of them preach to this day. Peradventure, their manner is to take longer

texts ; whereupon the comparison is made up, as if I preferred them before you. I know your Grace will not think me such a fool (if I had no fear of God) as to prefer, before your excellent gifts, men that I never heard. But look, as the French proverb is, ‘ He that is disposed to kill his dog, tells men he is mad.’ And whom men have once wronged, unless the grace of God be the more, they ever hate. Concerning the wrongs which these people have offered me, I shall take another time to inform your Grace. Where they say, your Grace doth find yourself deceived in me, I think it may be the truest word they said yet. For indeed I do think both you and many more are deceived in me ; accounting me to have some honesty, discretion, and grace, more than you will by proof find. But if, as it seems to me, that form hath this meaning, that they pretend to have undeceived you, I hope they are deceived ; yea, I hope they shall be deceived, if by such courses as these they think to unsettle me, and the Devil himself also, if he thinks to dismay me. ‘ I will go on in the strength of the LORD GOD, and remember his righteousness, even his alone,’ as by my Lord of Canterbury, when I first came over, I was exhorted, and have obtained help of God to do to this day.

“ But ‘ had I not work enough before, but I must bring Mr. COOKE upon my top ? How much better to study to be quiet, and to do mine own business, as at the first I came with a resolution to do.’ But I could not be quiet, nor without pity hear the complaints of those that resorted to me, some of them mine own neighbours and tenants, called into the Court, commonly by information of apparitors, holden there without just cause, and not dismissed without excessive fees. Lastly, one Mr. MAYOT, a Minister of the diocese of Ardagh, made a complaint to me, that he was excommunicated by Mr. COOKE, notwithstanding the correction of Ministers was excepted out of his patent. Whereupon I desired to see the patent, and to have a copy of it, that I might know how to govern myself. He said, Mr. ASKE, being then from home, should bring it to me

when the Bishop asked him, how he came to make so unjust a decree, he answered, that all his father had left him was a Register's place ; so he thought he was bound to support those Courts, which he saw would be ruined, if the way he took had not been checked.

As this was a leading case, great pains were taken to possess the Primate against the Bishop ; but his letters will best discover the grounds on which he went, and that noble temper of mind that supported him in so great an undertaking. The one is long, but I will not shorten it.

“ RIGHT REVEREND FATHER,

“ My honourable good Lord,

“ I have received your Grace's letters concerning MR. COOKE, and I do acknowledge all that your Grace writes to be true, concerning his sufficiency and experience to the execution of the ecclesiastical jurisdiction : neither did I forbear to do him right, in giving him that testimony, when before the Chapter I did declare and show the nullity of his patent. I have heard of my LORD ——'s attempt ; and I do believe, that if this patent had due form, I could not overthrow it, how unequal soever it be. But failing in the essential parts, besides sundry other defects, I do not think any reasonable creature can adjudge it to be good. I shall more at large certify your Grace of the whole matter, and the reasons of my Counsel herein. I shall desire herein to be tried by your Grace's own judgment, and not by your Chancellor's ; or, as I think in such a case I ought to be, by the Synod of the Province. I have resolved to see the end of this matter ; and do desire your Grace's favour herein no farther than the equity of the cause, and the good, as far as I can judge, of our Church, in a high degree, require. So, with my humble service to your Grace, and respectful commendations to MRS. USHER, I rest,

“ Kilmore,

“ Oct. 28, 1629.

“ Your Grace's in all duty,

“ WILL. KILMORE.”

at his return. Himself went to Dublin to the term. At the first view, I saw it was a formless chaos of authority, conferred upon him against all reason and equity. I had, not long after, occasion to call the Chapter together at the time of ordination. I showed the original, being brought forth by MR. ASKE, and desired to know if that were the Chapter-seal, and these their hands: they acknowledged their hands and seal, and said they were less careful in passing it, because they accounted that it did rather concern my predecessor than them. I showed its false Latin, nonsense, injustice, prejudice to them, contrariety to itself, and to the King's grant to me. I showed that there were, in one period, above five hundred words; and, which passed the rest, hanging in the air without any principal verb. I desired them to consider if the seal hanging to it were the Bishop's seal; they acknowledged that it was not: therefore, with protestation that I meant no way to call in question the sufficiency of MR. COOKE, or his former acts, I did judge the patent to be void, and so declared it; inhibiting MR. COOKE to do any thing by virtue thereof, and them to assist him therein. This is the true history of this business, howsoever MR. COOKE may disguise it. I suspended not him absent, and *indictâ causâ*; it was his commission, which was present, that I viewed, and which, with the Chapter, I censured; which if he can make good, he shall have leave, and time, and place enough.

“ And now to relate to your Grace my purpose herein. My Lord, I account, that to any work, to remove impediments is a great part of the performance. And amongst all the impediments to the work of GOD amongst us, there is not any one greater than the abuse of ecclesiastical jurisdiction. This is not only the opinion of the most godly, judicious, and learned men that I have known, but the cause of it is plain. The people pierce not into the inward and true reason of things; they are sensible in the purse: and that religion that makes men to be despisers of the world, and so far from encroaching upon others in matter of base gain, as rather to part with their own, they magnify.

This bred the admiration of the primitive Christians. Contrary causes must needs produce contrary effects. Wherefore, let us preach never so painfully and piously,—I say more, let us live never so blamelessly ourselves,—so long as the officers in our Courts prey upon them, they esteem us no better than publicans and worldlings ; and so much the more deservedly, because we are called spiritual men, and call ourselves reformed Christians. And if the honest and best of our own Protestants be thus scandalized, what may we think of Papists ; such as are all, in a manner, that we live among ? The time was, when I hoped the Church of Ireland was free from this abuse, at least more free than her sister of England. But I find I am deceived ; whether it be that distance of place, and being further out of the reach of the sceptre of justice, breeds more boldness to offend, or necessarily brings more delay of redress. I have been wont also, in Ireland, to except one Court ; but trust me, my Lord, I have heard it said, ‘ My Lord Primate is a good man ; but his Court is as corrupt as others.’ Some say worse ; (which, I confess to your Grace, did not a little terrify me from visiting till I might see how to do it with fruit ;) viz. that of your late visitation they see no profit, but the taking of money.

“ But to come to MR. COOKE : of all that have exercised jurisdiction in this land these late years, he is most cried out upon ; although he came off with credit when he was questioned, and justified himself by the table of fees, as by a leaden rule any stone may be approved as well as hewed. By what little I met with since I came hither, I am induced to believe that it was not for lack of matter, but that there was some other cause of his escaping in that trial. By this table, he hath taken in my predecessor’s time, and seeks to take in mine, fees for exhibits at visitations, for unions, sequestrations, relaxations, certificates, licenses, permutations of penance, and sentences (as our Court calls them) interlocutory in causes of correction. Such fees I cannot in my conscience think to be just. And yet he doth it in my name, and tells me I cannot call

him into question for it. Alas, my Lord, if this be the condition of a Bishop, that he standeth for a cipher, and only to uphold the wrongs of other men, what do I in this place? Am I not bound by my profession, made to God in your presence, to be gentle and merciful for CHRIST's sake to poor and needy people, and such as be destitute of help? Can I be excused another day with this, that thus it was ere I came to this place? Or, since I am persuaded MR. COOKE's patent is unjust and void, am I not bound to make it so; and to regulate, if I may, this matter of fees, and the rest of the disorders of the jurisdiction which his Majesty hath entrusted me withal? Your Grace saith, 'Truly it is a difficult thing, if not impossible, to overthrow a patent so confirmed;' and I know in deliberations it is one of the most important considerations, what we may hope to effect. But how can I tell till I have tried. To be discouraged ere I begin, is it not to consult with flesh and blood? Verily I think so; and therefore must put it to the trial, and leave the success to God. If I obtain the cause, the profit will be to this poor nation. If not, I shall show my consent to those my reverend Brethren that have endeavoured to redress this enormity before me; and I shall have the testimony of mine own conscience, that I have sought to discharge my duty to God and his people. Yea, which is the main, the work of my ministry and service to this nation shall receive furtherance howsoever, rather than any hinderance thereby. And if by the continuance of such oppressions any thing fall out otherwise than well, I shall have acquitted myself towards his Majesty, and those that have engaged themselves for me. At least I shall have the better reason and juster cause to resign to his Majesty the jurisdiction, which I am not permitted to manage.

“ And here I beseech your Grace, to consider seriously whether it were not happy for us to be rid of this charge, which, not being proper to our calling, is not possible to be executed without such deputies as subject us to the ill conceit of their unjust or indiscreet carriage? Or, if it shall

be thought fit to carry this load still, whether we ought not to procure some way to be discharged of the envy of it, and redress the abuse, with the greatest strictness we can devise? For my part, I cannot bethink me of any course fitter for the present, than to keep the Courts myself, and set some good order in them. And to this purpose I have been at Cavan, Belturbet, Granard, and Longford, and do intend to go to the rest; leaving with some of the Ministry there a few rules, touching those things that are to be redressed, that if my health do not permit me to be always present, they may know how to proceed in my absence.

“ Yea, and if MR. COOKE were the justest Chancellor in this kingdom, I would think it fit for me, as things now stand, to sit in these Courts; and the rather since I cannot be heard in the pulpits to preach, as I may in them. I have showed your Grace my intentions in this matter. Now I should require your direction in many things, if I were present with you. But, for the present, it may please you to understand, that at Granard one MR. NUGENT, a nephew as I take it to my LORD of WESTMEATH, delivered his letter to MR. ASKE, which he delivered me in open court, requiring that his tenants might not be troubled for christenings, marriages, or funerals, so they pay the Minister his due. This referred to a letter of my Lord Chancellor's, to the like purpose, which yet was not delivered till the Court was risen. I answered generally, that none of my Lord's tenants or others should be wronged. But then I would be strict in requiring them to bring their children to be baptized, and their marriages likewise to be solemnized with us; since they acknowledged these to be lawful and true, so that it was but wilfulness if any forbore. Here I desire your Grace to direct me. For to give way that they should not be so much as called in question, seems to further the schism they labour to make. To lay any pecuniary mulct upon them, as the value of a licence for marriage, and three-pence or four-pence for a christening, I know not by what law it can be done. To excommunicate them for not appearing or obeying, they being already none of our

body, and a multitude, it is to no profit, nay, rather makes the case worse.

“ And now ceasing to be troublesome, I commend your Grace to the protection of our merciful Father :

“ Kilmore,
“ Feb. 15, 1629.” • “ Your Grace’s in all duty,
“ WILL. KILMORE & ARDAGH.”

The other Bishops did not stand by our Bishop in this matter ; but were content to let him fall under censure, without interposing in it. Even the Primate told him, that the tide was so high that he could assist him no more ; for he stood by him longer than others of the order had done. But the Bishop was not disheartened by this. And as he thanked him for assisting him so long, so he said he was resolved, by the help of God, to try if he could stand by himself.

He went home, and resolved to go on in in his Courts as he had begun, notwithstanding this censure. For he thought he was doing that which was incumbent on him ; and he had a spirit so made, that he resolved to suffer martyrdom, rather than fail in any thing that lay on his conscience. But his Chancellor was either advised by those that governed the state, to give him no disturbance in that matter ; or was overcome by the authority he saw in him, that inspired all people with reverence for him : for, as he never called for the costs of one hundred pounds, so he never disturbed him any more, but named a Surrogate, to whom he gave order to be in all things observant of the Bishop, and obedient to him. So it seems, that though it was thought fit to keep up the authority of the Lay-Chancellors over Ireland, and not to suffer this Bishop’s practice to pass into a precedent ; yet order was given under-hand to let him go on as he had begun. And his Chancellor had so great a value for him, that, many years after this, he said, he thought there was not such a man on the face of the earth as BISHOP BEDELL was ; that he was too hard for all the Civilians in Ireland ; and that if he had not been borne down by mere force, he would have overthrown the Consistorial

Courts, and had recovered the episcopal jurisdiction out of the Chancellor's hands. But now that he went on undisturbed in his episcopal Court, he made use of it as became him, and not as an engine to raise his power and dominion; but considering that all church-power was for edification, and not for destruction, he both dispensed justice equally and speedily, and cut off many fees and much expense; and also, when scandalous persons were brought before him to be censured, he considered that church-censures ought not to be like the acts of tyrants, who punish out of revenge, but like the discipline of parents, who correct in order to the amendment of their children: so he studied chiefly to beget in all offenders a true sense of their sins. Many of the Irish Priests were brought often into his courts for their lewdness; and upon that he took occasion, with great mildness, and without scoffing or insultings, to make them sensible of the tyrannical imposition of their church, in denying their Priests leave to marry, which occasioned so much impurity among them; and this caused a good effect on some.

This leads me to another part of his character,—the care he took of the natives. He observed with much regret, that the English had all along neglected the Irish, as a nation not only conquered, but undisciplineable; and that the Clergy had scarcely considered them as a part of their charge, but had left them wholly in the hands of their own Priests, without taking any other care of them, but making them pay their tithes. And indeed, their Priests were a strange sort of people, that knew generally nothing but the reading of their offices, which were not so much as understood by many of them; so that the state both of the Clergy and laity was such, that it could not but raise great compassion in a man that had so tender a sense of the value of those souls which CHRIST had purchased with his blood. He therefore resolved to set about that apostolical work of converting the natives with the zeal and care that so great an undertaking required. He knew that the gaining of some of the more knowing of their Priests was

likely to be the quickest way ; for by their means he hoped to spread the knowledge of the reformed religion among the natives, or rather that of the Christian religion, to speak more strictly. For they had no sort of notion of Christianity ; but only knew that they were to depend upon their priests, and were to confess such of their actions, as they call sins, to them, and were to pay them tithes.

The Bishop prevailed on several priests to change ; and he was so well satisfied with the truth of their conversion, that he provided for some of them ecclesiastical benefices. This was thought a strange thing ; and was censured by many, as contrary to the interest of the English nation. For it was believed that all those Irish converts were still Papists at the heart, and might be so much the more dangerous, by that disguise which they had put on. But he, on the other hand, considered chiefly the duty of a Christian Bishop. He also thought that the true interest of England was to gain the Irish to the knowledge of religion, and to bring them by the means of that, which only turns the heart, to love the English nation : and so he judged that the wisdom of that course was apparent, as well as the piety of it ; since such as changed their religion would become thereby so odious to their own Clergy, that this would provoke them to further degrees of zeal in gaining others to come over after them. And he took great care to work, in those whom he trusted with the care of souls, a full conviction of the truth of religion, and a deep sense of the importance of it. And in this he was so happy, that of all the converts that he had raised to benefices, there was but one that fell back, when the rebellion broke out : and he not only apostatized, but both plundered and killed the English, among the first. But no wonder if one murderer was among our Bishop's converts, since there was a traitor among the twelve that followed our SAVIOUR.

There was a convent of Friars very near him, on whom he bestowed much pains, with very good success. That he might furnish his converts with the means of instructing

others, he made a short catechism, to be printed in one sheet, being English on the one page, and Irish on the other; which contained the elements and most necessary things of the christian religion, together with some forms of prayer, and some of the most instructive passages of Scripture. This he sent about all over his diocese; and it was received with great joy, by many of the Irish, who seemed to be hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and received this beginning of knowledge so well, that it gave a good encouragement to hope well upon further endeavours.

The Bishop did also set himself to learn the Irish tongue; and though it was too late for a man of his years to learn to speak it, yet he came to understand it to such a degree, as to compose a complete grammar of it, (which was the first that ever was made, as I have been told,) and to be a critic in it. He also had the Common Prayer read in Irish every Sunday in his Cathedral, for the benefit of the converts he had made, and was always present at it himself; and he engaged all his Clergy to set up schools in their parishes;—for there were so very few bred to read or write, that this obstructed the conversion of the nation very much. The New Testament and the Book of Common Prayer were already put in the Irish tongue; but he resolved to have the whole Bible, the Old Testament as well as the New, put also into the hands of the Irish; and therefore he laboured much to find out one that understood the language so well that he might be employed in so sacred a work. And, by the advice of the Primate, and several other eminent persons, he pitched upon one KING, who had been converted many years before, and was believed to be the most elegant writer of the Irish tongue then alive, both for prose and poetry. He was then about seventy; but, notwithstanding his age, the Bishop thought him not only capable of this employment, but qualified for a higher character; therefore he put him in Orders, and gave him a benefice in his diocese, and set him to work, in translating the Bible; which he was to do from the

English translation, since there were none of the nation to be found that knew any thing of the Originals. The Bishop set himself so much to the revising of this work, that always after dinner or supper he read over a chapter; and as he compared the Irish translation with the English, so he compared the English with the Hebrew and the Seventy Interpreters; and he corrected the Irish where he found the English translators had failed. He thought the use of the Scriptures was the only way to let the knowledge of religion in among the Irish, as it had first let the reformation into the other parts of Europe. And he used to tell a passage of a sermon that he heard FULGENTIO preach at Venice. It was on these words of CHRIST, "Have ye not read?"—and so he took occasion to tell the auditory, that if CHRIST were now to ask this question, "Have ye not read?"—all the answer they could make to it was, "No, for they were not suffered to do it." This was not unlike what the same person delivered in another sermon, when preaching upon PILATE's question, "What is Truth?" He told them, that at last, after many searches, he had found it out, and held out a New Testament, and said, "there it was in his hand;" but then he put it into his pocket, and said coldly, "But the book is prohibited." The Bishop had observed, that, in the primitive times, as soon as nations, how barbarous soever they were, began to receive the christian religion, they had the Scriptures translated into their vulgar tongues, and that all people were exhorted to study them; therefore he not only undertook and began this work, but followed it with so much industry, that in a very few years he finished the translation, and resolved to set about the printing of it. And as he had been at the great trouble of examining the translation, so he resolved to run the venture of the impression, and took that expense upon himself. It is scarcely to be imagined what could have obstructed so great and so good a work. The Priests of the Church of Rome had reason to oppose the printing of a book, that has been always so fatal to them; but it was a deep fetch to possess Reformed Divines with a

jealousy of this work. Yet that was done, but by a very well disguised method ; for it was said that the translator was a weak and contemptible man, and that it would expose such a work, as this was, to the scorn of the nation, when it was known who was the Author of it : and this was infused into the EARL of STRAFFORD, and into the ARCHBISHOP of CANTERBURY. And a bold young man, one BAILY, pretended a lapse of the benefice that the Bishop had given to the translator, and so obtained a broad seal for it, though it was in the Bishop's gift. The Bishop was much touched with this, and cited BAILY to appear before him. He had given him a Vicarage, and had taken an oath of him never to hold another ; so he objected to him both his violent intrusion into another man's right, and his perjury. BAILY, to cover himself from the last, procured a dispensation from the Prerogative Court, notwithstanding his oath, to hold more benefices. The Bishop looked on this as one of the worst and most scandalous parts of Popery, to dissolve the most sacred of all bonds, and it grieved his soul to see so vile a thing acted in the name of ARCHBISHOP USHER, though it was done by his Surrogates ; so that, without any regard to this, he served his obstinate clerk with several canonical admonitions ; but finding him still hardened in his wickedness, he deprived him of the benefice he had given him, and also excommunicated him, and gave orders that the sentence should be published through the whole deanery. Upon this, BAILY appealed to the Prerogative Court ; and the Bishop was cited to answer for what he had done. He went, and appeared before them ; but declined their authority, and would not answer to them. He thought it below the dignity of a Bishop to give an account of a spiritual censure, that he had inflicted on one of his Clergy, before two laymen that pretended to be the Primate's Surrogates ; and he put his declinator in twenty-four articles, all written with his own hand. He excepted to the incompetency of the Court, both because the Primate was not there in person, and because they who sat there had given clear evidences

of their partiality, which he had offered to prove to the Primate himself. He said the appeal from his sentence lay only to the Provincial Synod, or to the Archbishop's Consistory; and since the ground of BAILY's appeal was the dispensation that they had given him from his oath, they could not be the competent judges of that, for they were parties: and the appeal from abusive faculties lay only to a Court of Delegates, by the express words of the law: and by many indications it appeared, that they had prejudged the matter in BAILY's favour, and had expressed great resentment against the Bishop; and notwithstanding the dignity of his office, they had made him wait among the crowd, an hour and a half, and had given directions in the management of the cause as parties against him: they had also manifestly abused their power in granting dispensations contrary to the laws of God; and now they presumed to interpose in the just and legal jurisdiction that a Bishop exercised over his Clergy, both by the laws of God and the King's authority. Upon these grounds, he excepted to their authority. He was served with several citations to answer, and appeared upon every one of them; but notwithstanding the highest contempts which they put upon him, he showed no passion, but kept his ground still. In conclusion, he was declared Contumax, and the perjured intruder was absolved from the sentence, and confirmed in the possession of his ill-acquired benefice. It may easily be imagined, how much these proceedings were censured by all fair and equitable men; the constancy, the firmness, and the courage, which the Bishop expressed, being as much commended; as the injustice and violence of his enemies were condemned. The strangest part of this transaction was that which the Primate acted; who, though he loved the Bishop beyond all the rest of the order, and valued him highly for the zealous discharge of his office, which distinguished him so much from others, yet could not be prevailed on to interpose in this matter, nor to stop the unjust prosecution under which this good man had fallen for so good a work. Indeed, it went farther; for upon

the endeavours which he used to convert the Irish, and after he had refused to answer in the Archbishop's Court, it appears that he was in some measure alienated from him,—which drew from the Bishop the following answer to a letter that he had from him.

“ MOST REVEREND FATHER,

“ My honourable good Lord,

“ The superscription of your Grace's letters was most welcome unto me, as bringing under your own hand the best evidence of the recovery of your health, for which I did and do give hearty thanks unto God. For the contents of them, as your Grace conceived, they were not so pleasant. But the words of a friend are faithful, saith the wise man ; yet they are no less painful than any other. Unkindness cuts nearer to the heart than malice can do. Concerning your Grace's said letters, I have been at some debate with myself, whether I should answer them with DAVID's demand, ‘ What have I now done ? ’ or, as the wrongs of parents, with patience and silence. But MR. DEAN telling me, that this day he is going towards you, I will speak once, come of it what will.

“ You write, that the course I took with the Papists was generally cried out against ; neither do you remember in all your life, that any thing was done here by any of us, at which the professors of the Gospel did take more offence, or by which the adversaries were more confirmed in their superstitions and idolatry ; wherein you could wish that I had advised with my brethren before I would adventure to pull down that which they have been so long in building. Again, what I did, you know, was done out of a good intention ; but you was assured that my project would be so quickly refuted with the present success and event, that there would be no need my friends should advise me from building such castles in the air.

“ My Lord, all this is a riddle to me. What course I have taken with the Papists ; what I have done at which your Professors of the Gospel did take such offence, or the

adversaries were so confirmed ; what it is that I have adventured to do ; or what piece so long in building, I have pulled down ; what those projects were, and those castles in the air so quickly refuted with present success ;—as the LORD knows, I know not. For truly, since I came to this place, I have not changed one jot of my purpose, or practice, or course with the Papists, from that which I held in England, or in Trinity-College, or found (I thank God) any ill success, but the slanders only of some persons discontented against me for other occasions ; against which I cannot hope to justify myself, if your Grace will give ear to private informations. But let me know, I will not say, my accuser, (let him continue masked till God discover him,) but my transgression, and have place of defence ; and if my adversary writes a book against me, I will hope to bear it on my shoulder, and bind it to me as a crown.

“ For my recusation of your Court, I see it has stirred not only laughter, but some coals too. Your Chancellor desires me to acquit him to you, that he is none of those officers I meant ; I do it very willingly ; for I neither meant him nor any man else. But though it concerned your Grace to know what I credibly heard to be spoken concerning your Court, yet I did not think it was fit to take away the jurisdiction from Chancellors, and put it into the Bishops’ hands alone : nor did I imagine you would account that a wrong from me, which, out of my duty to God and you, I thought was not to be concealed from you. Some other passages there be in your Grace’s letters, which I——but I will lay my hand upon my mouth, and craving the blessing of your prayers, ever remain,

“ Your Grace’s poor brother, and humble servant,

“ WILL. KILMORE.”

The malice of MR. KING’s enemies was not satiated with the spoiling him of his benefice. For often it falls out, that those who have done acts of high injustice, seek some excuse for what they have done, by new injuries, and a vexatious prosecution of the injured person ; designing by

the noise which such repeated accusations may raise, to possess the world with an opinion of his guilt, which much clamour thus often produces, and to crush the person so entirely, that he may never again be in a capacity to recover himself, and to obtain his right. But I will give the reader a clearer view of this invidious affair from a letter which the Bishop wrote concerning it to the EARL of STRAFFORD.

“ RIGHT HONOURABLE, MY GOOD LORD,

“ That which I have sometimes done willingly, I do now necessarily, to make my address to your Honour by writing. My unfitness for conversation heretofore hath pleaded for me, and now your Lordship’s infirmity allows, and, in a sort enforces it. The occasion is, not my love of contention, but GOD’s honour and yours. I have lately received letters from my LORD of CANTERBURY; whereby I perceive his Grace has been informed that MR. KING, whom I employed to translate the Bible into Irish, is a man so ignorant, that the translation cannot be worthy of public use, and, besides, so obnoxious, that the church can receive no credit from any thing that is his. And his Grace adds, that he is so well acquainted with your Lordship’s disposition, that he assures himself you would not have given away his living, had you not seen just cause for it. I account myself bound to satisfy his Grace herein, and desire, if I may be so happy, to do it by satisfying you. I subscribe to his Grace’s persuasion, that if your Lordship had not conceived MR. KING to be such as he writes, you would not have given away his living. But, my Lord, the greatest, wisest, and justest men, do, and must, take many things upon the information of others; who themselves are men, and may sometimes out of weakness, or some other cause, be deceived. I beseech your Lordship to take information, not by them which never saw till yesterday, but by the ancient, either churchmen or statesmen of this kingdom, (in whose eyes he hath lived these many years,) as are the LORD PRIMATE, the BISHOP of MEATH, the LORD DILLON, SIR JAMES

WARE, and the like. I doubt not but your Lordship shall understand that there is no such danger that the translation should be unworthy, because he did it; being a man of that known sufficiency for the Irish especially, either in prose or verse, as few are his matches in the kingdom. And not to argue by conjecture, let the work itself speak, yea, let it be examined *rigoroso examine*: If then it be found approveable, let it not suffer disgrace from the small boast of the workman, but let him rather be absolved for the sufficiency of the work. Touching his being obnoxious, it is true that there is a scandalous information put in against him in the High-Commission-Court, by his despoiler MR. BAILY, and by an excommunicate despoiler, as myself, before the execution of any sentence, declared him in the Court to be. And MR. KING being cited to answer, and not appearing, (as by law he was not bound,) was taken *pro confesso*, deprived of his ministry and living, fined one hundred pounds, and decreed to be imprisoned. His adversary, MR. BAILY, before he was sentenced, purchased a new dispensation to hold his benefice, and was the very next day after, both presented in the King's title, (although the benefice be of my collation,) and instituted by my Lord Primate's Vicar: shortly after, he was inducted by an Archdeacon of another diocese; and a few days after, he brought down an Attachment, and delivered MR. KING to the Pursuivant: he was haled by the head and feet to horseback, and brought to Dublin; where he hath been kept under arrest these four or five months, and hath not been suffered to purge his supposed contempt, by oath, and witnesses, that by reason of his sickness he was hindered, whereby he was brought to death's-door, and could not appear, and that by the cunning of his adversary, he was circumvented, entreating that he might be restored to liberty. But it hath not availed him. My Reverend Colleagues of the High-Commission do some of them pity his case; others say the sentence passed cannot be reversed, lest the credit of the Court be attacked. They bid him simply submit himself, and acknowledge his sentence just.

Whereas the Bishops of Rome themselves, after most formal proceedings, do grant restitution *in integrum*, and acknowledge, that *Sententia Romanæ Sedis potest in melius commutari*. My Lord, if I understand what is right divine or human, these be wrongs upon wrongs ; which if they reached only to MR. KING's person, were of less consideration ; but when, through his side, that great work, the translation of God's book, so necessary for both his Majesty's kingdoms, is mortally wounded, pardon me, I beseech your Lordship, if I be sensible of it. I omit to consider, what feast our adversaries make of our rewarding him thus for that service ; or what this example will avail to the alluring of others to conformity. What should your Lordship have gained, if he had died (as it was almost a miracle he did not) under arrest, and had been at once deprived of living, liberty, and life ? God hath reprieved him, and given your Lordship means, upon right information, to remedy with one word all inconveniences. For conclusion, good my Lord, give me leave a little to apply the parable of NATHAN to KING DAVID, to this purpose : If the way-faring man that is come to us (for such he is, having never yet been settled in one place) have so short a stomach that he must be provided for with pluralities, since there are herds and flocks plenty, suffer him not, I beseech you, under colour of the King's name, to take the ewe of a poor man, to satisfy his ravenous appetite. So I beseech the heavenly Physician to give your Lordship health of soul and body. I rest,

“ My Lord,

“ Your Lordship's most humble servant in CHRIST JESUS,

“ Dec. 1, 1638.

“ WILL. KILMORE.”

By these practices was the printing of the Bible in Irish stopped at that time ; but if the rebellion had not prevented our Bishop, he was resolved to have it done in his own house, and at his own charge. Preparatory to that, he caused some of CHRYSOSTOM's Homilies, together

with some of LEO's, to be translated both into English and Irish, and reprinting his catechism, he added these to it in both languages: which were very well received, even by the priests and friars themselves.

He lived not to finish this great design; yet, notwithstanding the rebellion and confusion that followed in Ireland, the manuscript of the translation of the Bible escaped the storm; and, falling into good hands, was afterwards printed, chiefly by the zeal, and at the charge, of that noble christian philosopher, MR. BOYLE.

But to go on with the concerns of our Bishop, as he had great zeal for the purity of the Christian Religion, in opposition to the corruptions of the Church of Rome; so he was very moderate in all other matters, that were not of such importance. He was a great supporter of MR. DRURY's design of reconciling the Lutherans and the Calvinists; and as he directed him by many learned and prudent letters, so he allowed him twenty pounds a year, towards discharging the expense of that negotiation. And it appeared, by his managing a business that fell out in Ireland, that if all that were concerned in that matter had been blessed with such an understanding, and such a temper, as he had, there had been no reason to have despaired of it.

There came a company of Lutherans to Dublin, who were afraid of joining in communion with the Church of Ireland; and when they were cited to answer for it to the Archbishop's Consistory, they desired that some time might be granted them for consulting their Divines in Germany: and at last letters were brought from thence concerning their exceptions to communion with that church; because the presence of CHRIST in the Sacrament was not explained in such a manner as agreed with their doctrine. The ARCHBISHOP of DUBLIN sent these to our Bishop, that he might answer them; upon which he wrote so learned and full an answer to all their objections, that when this was seen by the German Divines, it gave them such entire

satisfaction, that they advised their countrymen to join in communion with the church. His moderation in this concern was a thing of no danger to him, but he gave proofs of it upon more tender occasions.

The troubles that broke out in Scotland, upon the account of the Book of Common Prayer, are so well known, that I need not enlarge upon them. When the Bishop heard of these things, he said that which NAZI'ANZEN said at Constantinople, when the stir was raised in the second General Council upon his account, "If this great tempest is risen for our sakes, take us up, and cast us into the sea, that so there may be a calm." And if all others had governed their dioceses as he did his, one may adventure to affirm, after DR. BERNARD, "That Episcopacy might have been kept still upon its wheels."

Some of those that were driven out of Scotland, came over to Ireland: among these there was one CORBET, that came to Dublin, who, being a man of quick parts, wrote a very smart book, showing the parallel between the Jesuits and the Scotch Covenanters. The spirit that was in this book, and the sharpness of the style, procured the author such favour, that a considerable living falling in the BISHOP of KILLALA's gift, he was recommended to it, and so he went to that Bishop, but was ill received by him. The Bishop had a great affection to his country, for he was a Scotchman born; and though he condemned the courses they had taken, yet he did not love to see them exposed in a strange nation, and did not like the man that had done it. The Bishop expressed an inclination to lessen the faults of the Scots, and to aggravate some provocations that had been given them. CORBET came up full of wrath, and brought with him many informations against the Bishop, which at any other time would not have been much considered; but then, it being thought necessary to make examples of all that seemed favourable to the Covenanters, it was resolved to turn him out of his bishopric, and to give it to MAXWELL, who had been BISHOP of Ross in Scotland, and was indeed a man of eminent parts, but

by his forwardness had been the unhappy instrument of that which brought on all the disorders in Scotland.

A Pursuivant was sent to bring up the BISHOP of KILLALA, and he was accused before the High-Commission-Court ; and every man being ready to push a man down that is falling under disgrace, many designed to merit by aggravating his faults. But when it came to our Bishop's turn to give his sentence in the Court, he, who was afraid of nothing but sinning against God, did not hesitate to venture against the stream. He first read over all that was objected to the Bishop at the bar : then he fetched his argument from the qualifications of a Bishop set down by ST. PAUL, in his Epistles to TIMOTHY and TITUS ; and added, that he found nothing in those articles contrary to those qualifications, nothing that touched either his life or doctrine. He fortified this, by showing in what manner they proceeded against Bishops, both in the Greek and Latin churches ; and so concluded in the Bishop's favour. This put many out of countenance, who had considered nothing in his sentence but the consequences that were drawn from the Bishop's expressions, from which they gathered the ill disposition of his mind ; so that they had gone high in their censures, without examining the canons of the Church in such cases. But though those that gave their votes after our Bishop, were more moderate than those that had gone before him ; yet the current ran so strong that none durst plainly acquit him, as our Bishop had done. So he was deprived, fined, and imprisoned, and his bishopric was given to MAXWELL, who did not long enjoy it : for he was stripped naked, wounded, and left among the dead, by the Irish ; but was preserved by the EARL of THOMOND, who, passing that way, took care of him, by which means he got to Dublin : and then his talent of preaching, that had been too long neglected by him, was better employed ; so that he preached very often, to the edification of his hearers, who were then in so great a consternation, that they needed all the comfort that he could minister to them. He went to the King to Oxford ; but was so much affected

with some ill news which he heard concerning some misfortune in the King's affairs in England, that he was, some hours after, found dead in his study.

The old degraded Bishop ADAIR was quickly restored to another bishopric, which came to be vacant upon a dismal account, which I would gladly pass over, if I could; but the thing is too well known. One ATHERTON, Bishop of Waterford, came to be accused and convicted of a crime not to be named, which God punished with fire from heaven; and suffered publicly for it. He expressed so great a repentance, that DR. BERNARD, who preached his funeral-sermon, and had waited on him in his imprisonment, had a very charitable opinion of the state in which he died. Upon this, ADAIR's case was so represented to the King, that he was provided with that bishopric. From which it may appear, that he was not censured so much for any guilt, as to strike a terror into all that might express the least kindness to the Scots Covenanters. But our Bishop thought the degrading of a Bishop was too sacred a thing to be done merely upon politic considerations.

BISHOP BEDELL conformed exactly to the forms and rules of the Church. He went constantly to Common Prayer in his Cathedral, and often read it himself, and assisted in it always with great reverence and affection. He took care to have the public service performed strictly according to the Rubric. He preached constantly twice a Sunday in his Cathedral on the Epistles and Gospels for the day, and catechised always in the afternoon before sermon; and he preached always twice a year before the Judges, when they made the Circuit. His voice was low; but as his matter was excellent, so there was a gravity in his looks and behaviour that struck his auditors.

When he came within the church, it appeared, in the composedness of his behaviour, that he observed the rule given by the Preacher, of "keeping his feet when he went into the house of God;" but he was not to be wrought on by the greatness of any man, or by the authority of any person's example, to go out of his own way;

though he could not but know that such things were then much observed, and measures were taken of men by these little distinctions, in which it was thought that the zeal of conformity discovered itself.

He preached very often in his episcopal habit, but not always, and used it seldom in the afternoon; nor did he love the pomp of a choir, or instrumental music, which he thought filled the ear with too much pleasure, and carried away the mind from the serious attention to the matter, which is indeed the singing with grace in the heart, and the inward melody with which God is chiefly pleased.

He never used the Common Prayer in his family; for he thought it was intended to be the solemn worship of Christians in their public assemblies, and that it was not so proper for private families.

So far I have prosecuted the relation of his most exemplary discharge of his episcopal function, reserving what is more personal and particular to the end, where I shall give his character. I now come to the conclusion of his life, which was suitable to all that had gone before. But here I must open one of the bloodiest scenes that the sun ever shone upon, and represent a nation all covered with blood, that was in full peace, under no fears or apprehensions, enjoying great plenty, under no oppression in civil matters, nor persecution upon the account of religion: for the Bishops and Priests of the Roman Communion enjoyed not only an impunity, but were almost as public in the use of their religion, as others were in that which was established by law; so that they wanted nothing but empire, and a power to destroy all that differed from them. And yet, on a sudden, this happy land was turned to a field of blood. Their Bishops resolved in one particular to fulfil the obligation of the oath they took at their consecration, that of persecuting all heretics to the utmost of their power; and their Priests, who were bred up in Spain, had brought over from thence the true spirit of their religion, which is ever breathing cruelty, together with a tincture of the Spanish temper, that had appeared in the conquest of the West Indies, and

missed, in all human appearance ; and though it was kept so secret, that there was not the least suspicion of any design on foot, till the night before ; yet then one that was among the chief of the managers of it, out of kindness to an Irishman, who was become a Protestant, communicated the project to him : the other went and discovered it to the Lords-Justices ; and by this means not only the Castle of Dublin was preserved, but in effect Ireland was saved ; for in Dublin there was both a shelter for such as were stripped and turned out of all they had, and a place of rendezvous, where they that escaped, before the storm had reached them, met to consult about their preservation. But though Dublin was thus secured, the rest of the English and Scots in Ireland fell into the hands of those merciless men, who reckoned it no small mercy, when they stripped people naked, and let them go with their lives. But the vast numbers that were butchered by them, which one of their own writers, in a discourse which he printed some years after, in order to animate them to go on, boasts to have exceeded two hundred thousand, and the barbarous cruelties which they used in murdering them, are things of so dreadful a nature, that I cannot go on with so dismal a narrative, but must leave it to the historians. I shall say no more of it than what concerns our Bishop. It may be easily imagined how much he was struck with that fearful storm, which was breaking on every hand of him, though it did not yet break in upon himself. There seemed to be a secret guard about his house : for though there was nothing but fire, blood, and desolation round about him, yet the Irish were so restrained, as by some hidden power, that they did him no harm for many weeks. His house was in no condition to make any resistance ; so that it was not any apprehension of the opposition that might be made to them, which bound them up. Great numbers of his neighbours had also fled to him for shelter : he received all that came, and shared every thing he had with them, so that all things were common among them ; and now that they had nothing to expect from men, he invited them all to turn with

him to God, and to prepare for that death which they had reason to look for every day : so that they spent their time in prayer and fasting, which last was now likely to be imposed on them by necessity.

The rebels expressed their esteem for him in such a manner, that he had reason to ascribe it wholly to that overruling Power, which stills the raging of the seas, and the tumult of the people : they seemed to be overcome with his exemplary conversation among them, and with the tenderness and charity which he had upon all occasions expressed for them ; and they often said, he should be the last Englishman that should be put out of Ireland. He was the only Englishman in the whole county of Cavan that was suffered to live in his own house without disturbance : not only his house, and all the out-buildings, but the church and the church-yard, were full of people ; and many, that a few days before lived in great ease and plenty, were now glad of a heap of straw or hay to lie upon, and of some boiled wheat to support nature ; and were every day expecting when those swords, that had, according to the prophetic phrase, “ drunk up so much blood,” should likewise be satisfied with theirs. They did now eat the bread of sorrow, and mingled their cups with their tears. The Bishop continued to encourage them to trust in God, and in order to that, he preached to them, the first LORD’S day after this terrible calamity had brought them about him, on the third Psalm, which was penned by David when there was a general insurrection of the people against him under his unnatural son ABSALOM : and he applied it all to their condition. He had a doleful assembly before him, an auditory all in tears. It requires a soul of an equal elevation to his, to imagine how he raised up their spirits, when he spake on these words, “ But thou, O LORD, art a shield for me, my glory, and the lifter up of my head : I laid me down and slept : I awaked, for the LORD sustained me : I will not be afraid of ten thousands of the people, that have set themselves against me, round about ; ” —and on the conclusion of the Psalm, “ Salvation belongeth

unto the LORD : thy blessing is upon thy people." The next LORD's day, hearing of the scoffings, as well as the cruelty of the Irish, he preached on these words in MICAH, " Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy : when I fall, I shall arise ; when I sit in darkness, the LORD shall be a light unto me. I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me : he will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness. Then she that is mine enemy shall see it, and shame shall cover her which said unto me, Where is the LORD thy God ?" By these means, and through the blessing of GOD upon them, they encouraged themselves in GOD, and were prepared for the worst that their enemies could do to them.

The Irish themselves were at a stand. The miscarriage of the design on Dublin Castle was a sad disappointment : they had no fleet, nor foreign support ; and though there were some good officers among them, yet they found the soldiers to be as cowardly, as the English inhabitants felt them to be cruel. Those of the county of Cavan seemed to see their error ; so they came to the Bishop, as the fittest man to interpose for them : he was willing to oblige those on the one hand, at whose mercy he was, and on the other hand to bring them to such a submission, as might at least procure some breathing time to the poor English, and to those few houses that stood out, but were falling within doors under an enemy that was more irresistible than the Irish ; for they were much straitened, their provisions failing them. The petition, which they signed and sent up to the Lords-Justices and Council, was too well penned to come from those that set their hands to it. It was drawn by the Bishop, who put their matter in his own words ; therefore I shall insert it here, though it gives the best colours to their rebellion of any of all their papers that I ever saw.

so they thought that a massacre was the surest way to work ; and intended, that the natives of Ireland should vie with the Spaniards for what they had done in America.

The conjuncture seemed favourable ; for the whole isle of Britain was so embroiled, that they reckoned they should be able to master Ireland, before any forces could be sent over to check the progress of their butchery. The EARL of STRAFFORD had left Ireland some considerable time before this. The Parliament of England was rising very high against the King ; and though the King was then gone to Scotland, it was rather for a present quieting of things, than that he gained them to his service. So they laid hold of this conjuncture, to infuse it into the people, that this was a proper time for them to recover their ancient liberty, shake off the English yoke, and possess themselves of those estates that had belonged to their ancestors. And to such as had some duty to the King it was given out, that what they were about was warranted by his authority. A seal was cut from another charter, and put to a forged commission, giving warrant to what they were going about. And because the King was then in Scotland, they made use of a Scots seal. They also pretended, that the Parliaments of both kingdoms being in rebellion against the King, the English of Ireland would be generally in the interest of the English Parliament ; so that it was said, they could not serve the King better than by making themselves masters in Ireland, and then declaring for the King against his other rebellious subjects.

These things took universally with the whole nation ; and the conspiracy was cemented by many oaths and sacraments ; and in conclusion all things were found to be so ripe, that the day was appointed in which they should every where break out ; and the Castle of Dublin being then a great magazine, it was resolved that they should seize on it, which would have furnished them with arms and ammunition, and have put the metropolis, and probably the whole island, into their hands. But, though this was so well laid, that the execution could not have

“ To the Right Honourable the Lords-Justices and Council.

“ The humble Remonstrance of the Gentry and Commonalty of the county of Cavan, of their Grievances common with other parts of this Kingdom of Ireland.

“ Whereas we, his Majesty's loyal subjects of his Highness's Kingdom of Ireland, have of long time groaned under many grievous pressures, occasioned by the rigorous government of such placed over us, as respected more the advancement of their own private fortunes than the honour of his Majesty, or the welfare of us his subjects, whereof we in humble manner declared ourselves to his Highness by our agents sent from the Parliament, the representative body of this kingdom; notwithstanding which, we find ourselves of late threatened with far greater and more grievous vexations, either with captivity of our consciences, losing our lawful liberties, or utter expulsion from our native seats, without any just ground given on our parts, to alter his Majesty's goodness so long continued to us; of all which we find great cause of fear, in the proceeding of our neighbour-nations, and do see it already attempted upon by certain petitioners for the like course to be taken in this kingdom: For the preventing therefore of such evils growing upon us in this kingdom, we have, for the preservation of his Majesty's honour, and our own liberties, thought fit to take into our hands, for his Highness's use and service, such forts, and other places of strength, as coming into the possession of others, might prove disadvantageous, and tend to the utter undoing the kingdom. And we do hereby declare, that herein we harbour not the least thought of disloyalty towards his Majesty, or purpose any hurt to any of his Highness's subjects in their possessions, goods, or liberty: only we desire that your Lordships will be pleased to make remonstrance to his Majesty, for us, of all our grievances and just fears, that they may be removed, and such a course settled by

the advice of the Parliament of Ireland, whereby the liberty of our consciences may be secured unto us, and we eased of our burdens in civil government. As for the mischiefs and inconveniences that have already happened through the disorder of the common sort of people, against the English inhabitants, or any other; we, with the Noblemen and Gentlemen, and such others of the several counties of this kingdom, are most willing and ready to use our and their best endeavours in causing restitution and satisfaction to be made, as in part we have already done.

“An answer hereunto is most humbly desired, with such present expedition as may by your Lordships be thought most convenient for avoiding the inconvenience of the barbarousness and uncivility of the commonalty, who have committed many outrages without any order, consenting, or privity of ours. All which we leave to your Lordships’ most grave wisdom.

“And we shall humbly pray, &c.”

But this came to nothing. While these things were in agitation, the titular BISHOP of KILMORE came to Cavan; he had a brother, whom the Bishop had converted, and had entertained in his house, till he found out a way of subsistence for him. He pretended that he came only to protect the Bishop; so he desired to be admitted to lodge in his house, and assured him that he would preserve him. But the Bishop, hearing of this, wrote the following letter in Latin to him; of which I shall give a translation in English.

“REVEREND BROTHER,

“I am sensible of your civility in offering to protect me by your presence in the midst of this tumult; and upon the like occasion I would not be wanting to do the like charitable office to you: but there are many things that hinder me from making use of the favour you now offer me. My house is small, and there is a great number

of miserable people of all ranks, ages, and of both sexes, who have fled hither as to a sanctuary ; besides that some of them are sick, among whom my own son is one. But that which is beyond the rest is the difference of our way of worship ; I do not say of our religion, for I have ever thought, and have published in my writings, that we have one common Christian Religion. Under our present miseries, we comfort ourselves with the reading of the Holy Scriptures, with daily prayers, which we offer up to God in our vulgar tongue, and with the singing of Psalms ; and since we find so little truth among men, we rely on the truth of God, and on his assistance. These things would offend your company, if not yourself ; nor could others be hindered, who would pretend that they came to see you, if you were among us ; and under that colour those murderers would break in upon us, who, after they have robbed us, would, in conclusion, think they did God good service by our slaughter. For my own part, I am resolved to trust to the divine protection. To a Christian, and a Bishop, who is now almost seventy, no death for the cause of CHRIST can be bitter : on the contrary, nothing is more desirable. And though I ask nothing for myself alone, yet if you will require the people, under an Anathema, not to do any other acts of violence to those whom they have so oft beaten, spoiled, and stripped, it will be both acceptable to God, honourable to yourself, and happy to the people, if they obey you : but if not, consider that God will remember all that is now done : To whom, Reverend Brother, I do heartily commend you.

“ Yours in CHRIST,

“ Nov. 2, 1641.

“ WILL. KILMORE.”

Indorsed thus,

“ To my Reverend and Loving Brother, D. SWINEY.”

This letter was the last which he ever wrote, and was indeed a conclusion becoming such a pen. It had at that time some effect ; for the Bishop gave him no disturbance

till about five weeks after this ; so that from the 23d of October, which was the dismal day in which the rebellion broke out, till the 18th of December following, he, together with all that were within his walls, enjoyed such quiet, that if it was not in all points a miracle, it was not far from one ; and it seemed to be an accomplishment of those words, “ A thousand shall fall on thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand ; but it shall not come nigh thee : there shall no evil befall thee ; for he shall give his angels charge over thee.” But to this letter I shall add the last paper of spiritual advice which the Bishop ever wrote. This he did at the request of one MRS. DILLON, who was a zealous and devout Protestant, but had been fatally deluded in her widowhood by MR. DILLON, son to the EARL of ROSCOMMON, whom, supposing him to be a Protestant, she had married, but enjoyed herself very little after that ; for though he used no violence to her, or to her children by her former husband, in the point of religion, yet he bred up the children which he had by her in his own superstition, and he was now engaged in the rebellion : So that she had at this time a vast addition to her former sorrows upon her ; and therefore desired that the Bishop, whose neighbour and constant hearer she had been, would send her such instructions in this sad calamity, as might both direct and support her. Upon this, he wrote the following paper.

“ You desire, as I am informed, (dear sister in CHRIST JESUS,) that I would send you some short memorial, to put you in mind how to conduct yourself in this sorrowful time. I will do it willingly ; the more, because, with one and the same labour, I shall both satisfy you, and recall my own thoughts also to the like performance of my own duty. Bethinking myself how I might best accomplish it, there came to my mind that short rule which the Apostle mentions in his Epistle to TITUS, and whereof you have been a diligent hearer in the school of grace, where he reduceth the whole practice of Christianity unto three

heads, of living *soberly, justly, and godly*: this last directing our carriage towards God, the middlemost towards our neighbour, and the foremost towards ourselves. Now since this is a direction for our whole life, it seems to me that we have no more to do at any time, but to con this lesson more perfectly, with some particular application of such parts of it, as are most suitable to the present occasions. And as to *sobriety*, first, (under which the virtues of humility, modesty, and contentedness, are contained,) since this is a time, wherein, as the Prophet saith, ‘The LORD of Hosts calleth to weeping and mourning, and pulling off the hair, and girding with sackcloth,’ you shall, by my advice, conform yourself to those, that by the hand of God suffer such things. Let your apparel and dress be mournful, as I doubt not but your mind is; your diet sparing and coarse, rather than full and liberal; frame yourself to the indifferency, whereof the Apostle speaketh, ‘In whatsoever state you shall be, therewith to be content; to be full, and to be hungry; and to abound and to want.’ Remember now that which is the lot of others; you know not how soon it may be your own. Learn to despise, and defy, the vain and falsely called wealth of this world, whereof you now see we have so casual and uncertain a possession.—This for sobriety, the first part of the lesson pertaining to yourself.

“Now for *justice*, which respects others, (and containeth the virtues of honour to superiors, discreet and equal government of inferiors, peaceableness to all, meekness, mercy, just dealing in matters of getting and spending, gratitude, liberality, just speech and desires,) God’s judgments being in the earth, the inhabitants of the world should learn righteousness, as the Prophet speaketh: call to mind, therefore, if in any of these you have failed, and turn your feet to God’s testimonies. Certainly these times are such, wherein you may be afflicted, and say with the Psalmist, ‘Horror hath taken hold of me, and rivers of tears run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy laws.’ Rebelling against superiors; misleading, not only by example,

but by compulsion, inferiors; laying their hands on them that were at peace with them; unjustly spoiling, and unthankfully requiting, those that had showed them kindness; no faith nor truth in their promises; judge, by the way, of the school that teacheth CHRIST thus: are these his doings? As for those that suffer, I shall not need to stir you up to mercy and compassion. That which is done in this kind is done to CHRIST himself, and shall be put upon account in your reckoning, and rewarded at his glorious appearance.

“The last and principal part of our lesson remains, which teacheth us how to behave ourselves *godly*, or religiously. To this belong, first, the duties of GOD’s inward worship, as fear, love, and faith in GOD; then outward, as invocation, the holy use of his word and sacraments, his name and sabbaths. The Apostle makes it the whole end and work for which we were set in this world, to seek the LORD; yet in public affliction, we are specially invited thereto, as it is written of JEHOSHAPHAT, when a great multitude came to invade him, that ‘he set his face to seek the LORD,’ and called the people to a solemn fast. So the Church professeth in the Prophet ISAIAH, ‘In the way of thy judgments, LORD, we have waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my soul have I desired thee in the night, yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early.’ In this public calamity therefore it is our duty to turn to him that smiteth us, and to humble ourselves under his mighty hand;—to conceive a reverent and religious fear towards him, who only, by turning away his countenance, can thus trouble us; contrary to the fear of man, who can do no more but kill the body;—to renew our love to our heavenly FATHER, who now offereth himself to us, as to children;—to give a proof of that love which we bear to our SAVIOUR, by keeping his sayings, and by hating, in comparison of him, and competition with him, father, mother, children, goods, and life itself; (which is the condition and proof of his disciples;)—and above all to revive and to reinforce our

faith and affiance, which are now brought to the trial of the fiery furnace, and of the lions' den. O that they might be found to our honour, praise, and glory, at the appearing of JESUS CHRIST. In the mean space, even now, let us be partakers of CHRIST's sufferings, and hear him from heaven encouraging us, 'Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.'

"Touching prayer, we have this gracious invitation, 'Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will hear thee;' as well as the example of all God's saints, and of our SAVIOUR in his agony. To this belong the humble confession of our sins, with earnest request of pardon; and the complaint of our misery and danger, with request of succour and protection. We have, besides the intercession of our Advocate with the FATHER, the cry of the innocent blood that hath been cruelly shed, and the LORD's own interesting himself in the cause, so that we may say with the Psalmist, 'Arise, O God, plead thine own cause; remember how the foolish man (yea, the man of sin) reproacheth thee daily. Forget not the voice of thine enemies; the tumult of those that rise against thee, increasing continually.'

"The stories of DAVID's flight before ABSALOM, of JEHOSEPHAT's behaviour when the enemies came against him, of HEZEKIAH's conduct, in SENNACHERIB's invasion, (*Isa.* xxxvii.) and the whole Book of ESTHER, are fit scriptures now to be read, that through the patience and comfort of them we might have hope.

"Now because we know not how soon we may be called to sanctify God's name, by making profession thereof, you may perhaps desire to know what to say in that day. You may openly profess your not doubting of any article of the catholic faith, shortly laid down in the Creed, or more largely laid down in the Holy Scriptures, but that you consent not to certain opinions, which are no points of faith, which have been brought into common belief without warrant of Scripture, or pure antiquity; as namely:—'That it is necessary to salvation to be under

the Pope; That the Scriptures ought not to be read by the common people; That the doctrine of Holy Scripture is not sufficient to salvation; That the service of God ought to be in a language not understood by the people; That the Communion should not be administered to them in both kinds; That the bread in the LORD's Supper is transubstantiated into his body; That he is there sacrificed for the quick and dead; That there is any purgatory besides CHRIST's blood; That our good works can merit heaven; That the saints hear our prayers, and know our hearts; That images are to be worshipped; That the Pope is infallible, and can command Angels; That we ought to pray to the dead.'

"In all these, notwithstanding, you may profess your teachableness, if by sound reasons, out of God's word, you shall be convinced of the truth of them: and because we know not how far it will please God to call us to make resistance against sin, whether unto blood itself, or not, it shall be wisdom for us to prepare ourselves for the last care of a godly life, which is to die godly. This the Apostle PAUL calleth 'sleeping in JESUS,' implying thereby our faith in him, our being found in his work, and our committing our souls into his hands with peace. Such a sweet and heavenly sleep was that of ST. STEPHEN, whose last words for himself were, 'LORD JESUS, receive my spirit,' and for his tormentors, 'Lord, lay not this sin to their charge;' wherewith I will end this writing, and wish to end my life, when the will of God shall be, to whose gracious protection, dear sister, I do heartily commit you.

"Nov. 23, 1641."

These advices show what temper that holy man displayed in this his extremity. They had a very good effect on the lady; for as, by reading them over very often, she got to be able to say them all without book, so she did that which was much more, she lodged them in her heart, as well as in her memory.—While this good man was now every day waiting for his crown, the rebels sent to him, desiring him

to dismiss the company that was about him; but he refused to obey their cruel order, and resolved to live and die with them; and would much more willingly have offered himself to have died for them, than have accepted of any favour for himself, from which they would be shut out. And when they sent him word, that though they loved and honoured him beyond all the English that ever came into Ireland, because he had never done wrong to any, but good to many, yet they had received orders from the Council of State at Kilkenny, who had assumed the government of the rebels, that if he would not put away the people who had gathered about him, they should take him from them; he said no more, but in the words of DAVID and ST. PAUL, "Here I am; the LORD do unto me as seems good to him; the will of the LORD be done."

So, on the 18th of December, they came and seized on him, and on all that belonged to him, and carried him and his two sons, and MR. CLOGY, as prisoners to the Castle of Lochwater, the only place of strength in the whole country. It was a little tower in the midst of a lake, about a musket-shot from any shore: and though there had been a little island about it anciently, yet the water had so gained on it, that there was not a foot of ground above water, but only the tower itself. They suffered the prisoners to carry nothing with them; for the titular Bishop took possession of all that belonged to the Bishop, and said mass the next LORD's day in the church. They set the Bishop on horseback, and made the other prisoners go on foot by him: and thus he was lodged in this Castle, which was a most miserable dwelling.

The Castle had been in the hands of one MR. CULLUM, who, as he had the keeping of the fort trusted to him, had also a good allowance for a magazine to be laid up in it, for the defence of the country; but he had not a pound of powder, nor one fixed musket in it; and he fell under the just punishment of the neglect of his trust, for he was taken the first day of the rebellion, and was himself made a prisoner here. All but the Bishop were at first put into

irons; for the Irish, who were perpetually intoxicated, were afraid lest they should seize both on them and on the Castle. Yet it pleased God so far to abate their fury, that they took off their irons, and gave them no disturbance in the worship of God, which was now all the comfort that was left them.

The house was extremely open to the weather, and ruinous: and as the place was bare and exposed, so that winter was very severe; which was a great addition to the misery of those whom the rebels had stripped naked, leaving to many not so much as a garment to cover their nakedness. But it pleased God to bring another prisoner to the same dungeon, who was of great use to them, one RICHARD CASTLEDINE, who came over a poor carpenter to Ireland, with nothing but his tools on his back, and was first employed by one SIR RICHARD WALDRON in the carpentry-work of a castle, which he was building in the parish of Cavan: but SIR RICHARD wasting his estate before he had finished his house, and afterwards leaving Ireland, God had so blessed the industry of this CASTLEDINE, during thirty years' labour, that he bought this estate, and having only two daughters, he married one of them, out of gratitude, to SIR RICHARD's youngest son, to whom he intended to have given the estate that was his father's. He was a man of great virtue, and abounded in good works, as well as in exemplary piety: he was so good a husband, that the Irish believed he was very rich; so they preserved him, hoping to draw a great deal of money from him. He, being brought to this miserable prison, got some tools and old boards, and fitted them up as well as was possible, to keep out the weather. The keepers of the prison brought their prisoners abundance of provision, but left them to dress it for themselves; which they that knew little what belonged to cookery were glad to do, in such a manner as might preserve their lives, and were all of them much supported in their spirits.

They did not suffer as evil doers, and they were not ashamed of the cross of CHRIST, but rejoiced in God in

the midst of their afflictions; and the old Bishop took joyfully the spoiling of his goods, and the restraint of his person, comforting himself in this, that these light afflictions would quickly work for him a more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

The day after his imprisonment, being the LORD's day, he preached to his little flock on the Epistle for the day, which set before them the pattern of the humility and suffering of CHRIST; and on Christmas-day he preached on *Gal.* iv. 4, 5, and administered the sacrament to the small congregation about him; their keepers having been so charitable as to furnish them with bread and wine. On the 26th of December MR. WILLIAM BEDELL, the Bishop's eldest son, preached on ST. STEPHEN's last words, which afforded proper matter for the meditation of persons, who were every day in expectation when they should be put to give such a testimony of their faith, as that first martyr had done: and on the 2d of January, which was the last Sunday of their imprisonment, MR. CLOGY preached on *Luke* ii. 32—34.

During all their religious exercises, their keepers never gave them any disturbance; and indeed they behaved so gently toward them, and their natures seemed to be so much changed, that it looked like a second stopping of the mouths of lions. They often told the Bishop, that they had no personal quarrel with him, and no other reason for being so severe to him, but because he was an Englishman.

But while he was in this dismal prison, some of the Scots of that county, who had retired to two houses which were strong enough to resist any thing but cannon, and were commanded by SIR JAMES CRAIG, SIR FRANCIS HAMILTON, and SIR ARTHUR FORBES, now LORD GRENARD, finding themselves like to suffer more by hunger, than by the siege that was laid to them, made so resolute a sally upon the Irish, that they killed several, took some prisoners, and dispersed the rest, so that many months passed before they offered to besiege them any more.

Among their prisoners, four were men of considerable

interest ; so they negotiated an exchange of them for the Bishop, with his two sons, and MR. CLOGY, which was concluded ; and the prisoners were delivered on both sides on the 7th of January. But though the Irish promised to suffer the Bishop, with the other three, to go safe to Dublin, yet they would not let them go out of the country, but intended to make further advantage by having them still among them ; and so they were suffered to go to the house of an Irish Minister, DENNIS O' SHERIDAN, to whom some respect was showed by reason of his extraction, though he had forsaken their religion, and had married an English woman. He continued firm in his religion, and relieved many in their extremity.

Here the Bishop spent the few remaining days of his pilgrimage, having his latter end so full in view, that he seemed dead to the world, and every thing in it, and to be hasting unto the coming of the day of God. During the last Sabbaths of his life, though there were three Ministers present, he read all the prayers and lessons himself, and likewise preached on all those days.

On the 9th of January, he preached on the whole 44th Psalm, being the first of the psalms appointed for that day, and very suitable to the miseries in which the English then were, who were killed all the day long, as sheep appointed for meat. Next Sabbath, which was the 16th, he preached on the 79th Psalm, the first psalm for the day, which runs much on the like argument, when the temple was defiled, and Jerusalem was laid on heaps, and the dead bodies of God's servants were given to be meat to the fowls of heaven, and their flesh to the beasts of the earth, and their blood was shed like water, and there was none to bury them. Their condition being so like one another, it was very proper to put up that prayer, " O remember not against us former iniquities ; let thy tender mercies speedily prevent us : for we are brought very low ; "—together with the other, " Let the sighing of the prisoner come before thee ; according to the greatness of thy power, preserve thou those that are appointed to die."

On the 23d, he preached on the last ten verses of the 71st Psalm, remarking on their great fitness to express his present condition, especially in these words, “O God, thou hast taught me from my youth ; and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works : now also when I am old, and grey-headed, forsake me not.”

And on the 30th, which was the last LORD’S day in which he had strength enough to preach, he discoursed on the 144th Psalm, the first appointed for that day ; and when he came to the words in the seventh verse, which are also repeated in the eleventh,—“Send thine hand from above ; rid me, and deliver me out of great waters, from the hand of strange children ; whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood ;—he repeated them again and again, with so much zeal and affection, that it appeared how much he was hasting to the day of God, and that his heart was crying out, “Come, LORD JESUS, come quickly ; how long ? ” And he dwelt so long upon them, with so many sighs, that all the little assembly about him melted into tears, and looked on this as a presage of his approaching dissolution. And it proved too true ; for on the following day he sickened ; his disease, on the second day after, appeared to be an ague ; and on the fourth day, apprehending his speedy change, he called for his sons, and his sons’ wives, and spake to them at several times, as nearly in these words, as their memories could serve them to write them down soon after.

“I am going the way of all flesh ; I am now ready to be offered up, and the time of my departure is at hand : knowing therefore that shortly I must put off this tabernacle, even as our LORD JESUS CHRIST hath showed me, I know also that if this my earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, I have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, a fair mansion in the New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God. Therefore to me to live is CHRIST, and to die is gain ; which increaseth my desire, even now to depart, and to be with CHRIST, which is far better than to

continue here in all the transitory, vain, and false pleasures of this world, of which I have seen an end.

“Hearken therefore unto the last words of your dying father : I am no more in this world, but ye are in the world ; I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God, through the all-sufficient merits of JESUS CHRIST my REDEEMER ; who ever lives to make intercession for me, who is a propitiation for all my sins, and hath washed me from them all in his own blood ; who is worthy to receive glory, and honour, and power ; who hath created all things, and for whose pleasure they are and were created.

“My witness is in heaven, and my record on high, that I have endeavoured to glorify God on earth. And in the ministry of the Gospel of his dear SON, which was committed to my trust, I have finished the work which he gave me to do, as a faithful ambassador of CHRIST, and steward of the mysteries of God. I have preached righteousness in the great congregation : lo, I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, thou knowest. I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart ; I have declared thy faithfulness, and thy salvation ; I have not concealed thy loving-kindness and thy truth from the great congregation of mankind. He is near that justifieth me, that I have not concealed the words of the Holy One ; but the words that he gave to me, I have given to you, and ye have received them.

“ I had a desire and resolution to walk before God, in every station of my pilgrimage, from my youth up to this day, in truth, and with an upright heart, and to do that which was upright in his eyes, to the utmost of my power ; and what things were gain to me formerly, these things I now count loss for CHRIST ; yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of JESUS CHRIST my LORD, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things ; and I count them but dung, that I may win CHRIST, and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is

through the faith of CHRIST, the righteousness which is of God by faith ; that I may know Him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death. I press therefore towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in JESUS CHRIST.

“ Let nothing separate you from the love of CHRIST, neither tribulation, nor distress, nor persecution, nor famine, nor nakedness, nor peril, nor sword ; though, as we hear and see, for his sake we are killed all the day long, we are counted as sheep for the slaughter : yet in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us : For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any creature, shall be able to separate me from the love of God in CHRIST JESUS my LORD. Therefore, love not the world, nor the things of the world ; but prepare daily and hourly for death, which now besieges us on every side ; and be faithful unto death, that we may meet together joyfully on the right hand of CHRIST at the last day, and follow the Lamb wheresoever he goeth, with all those that are clothed with white robes, in sign of innocency, and palms in their hands in sign of victory ; which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. They shall hunger no more, nor thirst ; neither shall the sun light on them, or any heat ; for the Lamb, that is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

“ Choose rather with MOSES to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season ; which will be bitterness in the latter end. Look therefore for sufferings, and to be daily made partakers of the sufferings of CHRIST, to fill up that which is behind of the affliction of CHRIST in your flesh, for his body's sake, which is the church. What can you look for, but one woe after another, while the man of sin is thus suffered

to rage, and to make havoc of God's people at his pleasure; while men are divided about trifles, who ought to have been more vigilant over us, and careful of those, whose blood is precious in God's sight, though now shed every where like water. If ye suffer for righteousness, happy are ye; be not afraid of their terror, neither be ye troubled; and be in nothing terrified by your adversaries; which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God. For to you is given, in the behalf of CHRIST, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake. Rejoice therefore in as much as ye are partakers of CHRIST's sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. And if ye be reproached for the name of CHRIST, happy are ye; the SPIRIT of glory and of CHRIST resteth on you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

"God will surely visit you in due time, and turn your captivity as the rivers of the south, and bring you back again into your possession in this land. Though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations; yet ye shall reap in joy, though now ye sow in tears. All our losses shall be recompensed with abundant advantages; for my God will supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by JESUS CHRIST, who is able to do exceeding abundantly for us, above all that we are able to ask or think."

After that he blessed his children, and those that stood about him, in an audible voice, in these words: "God of his infinite mercy bless you all, and present you holy and unblameable, and unreprouvable in his sight, that we may meet together at the right hand of our blessed SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, with joy unspeakable, and full of glory, Amen." To which he added these words, "I have fought a good fight; I have finished the course of my ministry and life together. Though grievous wolves have entered in among us, not sparing the flock, yet I trust the great Shepherd of his flock will save and deliver them out of all places,

where they have been scattered in this cloudy and dark day; and they shall be no more a prey to the heathen, neither shall the beasts of the land devour them; but they shall dwell safely, and none shall make them afraid. O LORD, I have waited for thy salvation." And after a little interval he said, "I have kept the faith once given to the saints; for the which cause I have also suffered these things: but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day."

After this time he spoke little; for as his sickness increased, his speech failed, and he slumbered out most of the time; only at intervals, it appeared that he was cheerfully waiting for his change; till about midnight, on the 7th of February, he fell asleep in the LORD, and obtained his crown, which in some sort was a crown of martyrdom; for no doubt the weight of sorrow which lay upon his mind, and his ill usage in his imprisonment, had much hastened his death: and he suffered more in his mind by what he had lived to hear and see during the last fifteen weeks of his life, than he could have done, if he had fallen by the sword, among the first of those that felt the rage of the Irish. On the 9th of February, he was buried according to the direction himself had given, next to his wife's coffin. The Irish did him unusual honours at his burial; for the chief of the rebels gathered their forces together, and with them accompanied his body from MR. SHERIDAN'S house to the church-yard of Kilmore, in great solemnity; and they desired MR. CLOGY to bury him according to the office prescribed by the Church; but though the Gentlemen were so civil as to offer it, yet it was not thought adviseable to provoke the rabble so much, as perhaps that might have done; so it was passed over. But the Irish discharged a volley of shot at his interment, and cried out in Latin, *Requiescat in pace ultimus Anglorum*, "May the last of the English rest in peace." For they had often said, that as they esteemed him the best of the English Bishops, so he should be the last that should be left among them.

Thus lived and died this excellent Bishop; in whom so many of the greatest characters of a primitive and apostolical Bishop did show themselves so eminently, that it seemed fit that he should still speak to the world, though dead, both for convincing the unjust enemies of that venerable Order, and for the instruction of those that succeed him in it. It is to be hoped that the solemn, though silent language of so bright an example will have the desired effect in both ways. I shall add a little of his character.

He was a tall and graceful person; there was something in his looks and carriage that discovered what was within, and created a veneration for him. He had an unaffected gravity in his deportment, and a decent simplicity in his dress and apparel. He had a long and broad beard; for none ever saw a razor pass upon his face. His grey hairs were a crown to him, both for beauty and honour. His strength continued firm to the last; so that the week before his last sickness, he walked about as vigorously and nimbly as any of the company, and leaped over a broad ditch; so that his sons were amazed at it, and could scarcely follow him. His eyes continued so good that he never used spectacles, nor did he suffer any decay in any of his natural powers; only by a fall in his childhood he had contracted a deafness in his left ear. He had great strength and health of body, except that, a few years before his death, he had some severe fits of the stone, which his sedentary course of life seemed to have brought on him, and which he bore with wonderful patience. The best remedy that he found for it was to dig in his garden till he had very much heated himself, by which he obtained a mitigation of his pain. He took much pleasure in a garden; and having brought over some curious instruments out of Italy, for racemation, engrafting, and inoculating, he was a great master in the use of them.

His judgment and memory, as they were very extraordinary, so they remained with him to the last. He always preached without notes, but often wrote down his meditations after he had preached them. He did not affect to show

any other learning in his sermons, but what was proper for opening his text, and clearing the difficulties in it ; which he did by comparing the originals with the most ancient versions. His style was clear and full, but plain and simple ; for he abhorred all affectation of pompous rhetoric in sermons, as contrary to the simplicity of CHRIST. His sermons did all aim at the great design of infusing into the hearts of his hearers right apprehensions and warm thoughts of the great things of the Christian religion ; which he did with so much the more authority, because it appeared that he was much moved himself with those things which he delivered to others.

He was always at work in his study, when the affairs of his function did not lead him out of it ; in which his chief employment was the study of the text of the Scripture. He read the Hebrew and Septuagint so much, that they were as familiar to him as the English translation. He read every morning the Psalms appointed by the Common Prayer for the day in Hebrew ; or if his son, or any other that was skilled in the Hebrew, was present, he read one verse out of the Hebrew, turning it into Latin, and the other read the next, and so by turns, till they went through them. He had gathered a vast heap of critical expositions of Scripture. All this, with his other manuscripts, of which there was a great trunk full, fell into the hands of the Irish. He had written very learned paraphrases and sermons on all those parts of Scripture that were prescribed to be read in the second service, but all these were lost. His great Hebrew manuscript was happily rescued out of the hands of those devourers of all sacred things, and is to this day preserved in the library of Emmanuel College ; for an Irishman, whom he had converted, went among his countrymen, and brought out that, and a few other books to him.

Every day after dinner and supper, a chapter of the Bible was read at his table, whosoever were present, Protestants or Papists ; when Bibles were laid down before every one of the company, and before himself, either the Hebrew or Greek, and in his last years the Irish translation,

was laid; and he usually explained the difficulties that occurred.

He wrote many books of controversy; which was chiefly occasioned by the late engagements that lay on him, to labour much in the conversion of persons of the Roman Communion: and the knowledge which he had of that church, and their way of worship, by what he had seen and observed while he was at Venice, raised in him a great zeal against their corruptions.

He kept a great correspondence, not only with the divines of England, but with many others over Europe; for he wrote both Latin and Italian very elegantly. He was very free in his conversation, but talked seldom of indifferent matters; he expressed a great modesty of spirit, and a moderation of temper in every thing he spoke, and his discourse still turned to something which made his company useful and instructive. He spoke his own thoughts very plainly: and as he bore well the freedom of others, so he took all the discreet liberty that became a man of his age and station, and did not hesitate to tell even the learned and worthy PRIMATE USHER such things as he thought were blameworthy in him: and with the same sincerity he showed him some critical mistakes which he met with in some of his works. They were very few, and not of any great importance; but they did not agree with the Primate's exactness in other things, and so he laid them before him; which the other received from him with that kindness and humility that were natural to him. His habit was decent and grave; he wore no silk, but plain stuffs; the furniture of his house was not pompous nor superfluous, but necessary for common use, and proper. His table was well covered, according to the plenty that was in the country, but there was no luxury in it. Great resort was made to him, and he observed a true hospitality in house-keeping. Many poor Irish families about him were maintained out of his kitchen: and in the Christmas time he had the poor always eating with him at his own table; and he brought himself to endure both the

sight of their rags, and their rudeness. He was not forward to speak, and he expressed himself in very few words in public companies. At public tables he usually sat silent. Upon a certain occasion at the EARL of STRAFFORD's table, some one observed, that while they were all talking, he said nothing : so the Primate answered, "Broach him, and you will find good liquor in him." Upon which that person proposed a question in divinity to him, and in answering it, the Bishop showed both his own sufficiency so well, and puzzled the other so much, that all at table, except the Bishop himself, fell a laughing at the other. The greatness of his mind, and the undauntedness of his spirit on all occasions, have appeared very evidently in many of the passages of his life ; but though that height of mind is often accompanied with a great mixture of pride, nothing of that appeared in the Bishop. He carried himself towards all people with such a gaining humility, that he got into their hearts. He lived with his clergy as if they had been his brethren. When he kept his visitations, he would not accept of the invitations that were made him by the great men of the country, but would needs eat with his brethren in such poor inns, and of such coarse fare, as the places afforded. A person of quality, who had prepared an entertainment for him during his visitation, took his refusing it so ill, that whereas the Bishop promised to come and see him after dinner, as soon as he came near his gate, which was standing open, it was presently shut, on design to affront him, and he was kept half an hour knocking at it : the affront was visible, and when some would have had him go away, he would not do it, but said, "They will hear ere long." At last the master of the house came out, and received him with many shows of civility ; but he made a very short visit, and though the rudeness he met with prevailed not on him, either to resent it, or to go away upon it, yet it appeared that he understood it well enough. He avoided all affectation of state or greatness in his carriage : he went about always on foot, when he was at Dublin, one servant only attending him,

except on public occasions, that obliged him to ride in procession among his brethren. He never kept a coach, for his strength continued so entire that he was always able to ride on horseback. He avoided the affectation of humility as well as of pride; the former flowing often from greater pride: and amidst all those extraordinary talents, with which God had blessed him, it never appeared that he over-valued himself, or despised others; that he assumed to himself a dictatorship, or was impatient of contradiction. He took an ingenious device to put him in mind of his obligations both to purity and humility: it was a flaming crucible, with this motto in Hebrew, "Take from me all my tin." The word in Hebrew that signifies *tin* was *Bedil*. This imported that he thought that every thing in himself was but base alloy, and therefore he prayed that God would cleanse him from it. His great humility made the secret parts of his goodness, as to his private walking with God, less known, except as they appeared in that best and surest indication of it, which his life and conversation gave: yet if the rebels had not destroyed all his papers, there would have been found among them great discoveries of this; for he kept a daily journal for many years; but of what sort it was, how full, and how particular, is only known to God; since no man ever saw it, unless some of the rebels found it: though it is not probable that they would take the pains to examine his papers, it being more likely that they destroyed them all in a heap. He never thought of changing his see, or of rising to a more advantageous bishopric, but considered himself as under a tie to his see, that could not be easily dissolved: so that when the translating him to a bishopric in England was proposed to him, he refused it, and said he should be as troublesome a Bishop in England, as he had been in Ireland.

It appeared that he had a true and generous notion of religion, and that he did not look upon it so much as a system of opinions, or a set of forms, as a divine discipline that reforms the heart and life; and therefore when some

men were valued upon their zeal for some lesser matters, he had these words of ST. AUGUSTINE often in his mouth, "It is not leaves but fruit that I seek." This was the true principle of his great zeal against Popery: It was not the peevishness of a party, the sourness of a speculative man, nor the concern of an interested person, which wrought on him: but he considered the corruptions of that church as an effectual course for enervating the true design of christianity; and this he not only gathered from speculation, but from what he saw and knew during his long abode in Italy.

His devotion in his closet was only known to Him, who commanded him to pray in secret. In his family, he prayed always thrice a day; in the morning, and before dinner, and after supper: and he never turned over this duty, or the short devotions before and after meat, to his chaplain, but was always his own chaplain. He looked upon the obligation of observing the sabbath, as moral and perpetual, and considered it as so great an engine for carrying on the true ends of religion, that as he would never go into the liberties that many practised on that day, so he was exemplary in his own exact observation of it; preaching always twice, and catechising once; and besides that, he used to go over the sermons again in his family, and sing psalms, and concluded all with prayer.

As for his domestic concerns, he married one of the family of the L'ESTRANGES, who had been before married to the Recorder of St. Edmond'sbury. She proved to be in all respects a very fit wife for him; she was exemplary for her life, humble and modest in her habit and behaviour, and was singular in many excellent qualities, particularly in a very extraordinary reverence that she payed him. She bore him four children, three sons and a daughter; but one of the sons and the daughter died young, so none survived but WILLIAM and AMBROSE. The just reputation which his wife had for her piety and virtue, made him choose for the text of her funeral sermon, "A good name is better than ointment." She died of a lethargy three years before

the rebellion broke out ; and he preached her funeral-sermon, with such a mixture both of tenderness and moderation, as touched the whole congregation so much, that there were very few dry eyes in the church all the while. He did not like burying in the church ; for, as he observed, there was much both of superstition and pride in it, so he believed it was a great annoyance to the living, when there was so much of the steam of dead bodies rising about them. He was likewise much offended at the rudeness which the crowding of dead bodies in a small parcel of ground occasioned ; for the bodies already laid there, and not yet quite rotten, were often raised and mangled ; so that he made a canon in his Synod against burying in churches : and as he often wished that burying-places were removed out of all towns, so he did choose the most remote and least frequented place of the church-yard of Kilmore for his wife, and by his Will he ordered that he should be laid next her with this bare inscription,

Depositum GULIELMI quondam Episcopi KILMORENSIS.

Depositum cannot bear an English translation, it signifying somewhat given to another in trust ; so he considered his burial as a trust left in the earth till the time that it shall be called upon to give up its dead.

As for his two sons, he was satisfied to provide for them in so modest a way, as showed that he neither aspired to high things on their behalf ; nor did he consider the revenue of the church as a property of his own, out of which he might raise a great estate for them. He provided his eldest son with a benefice of eighty pounds a year, in which he laboured with that fidelity which became the son of such a father : his second son, not being a man of letters, had a little estate of sixty pounds a year given him by the Bishop ; which was the only purchase that he is said to have made : and we are informed, that he gave nothing to his eldest son but that benefice, which he so well deserved. So little advantage did he give to the enemies of the Church, either to those of the Church of Rome, against the marriage of the

Clergy, or to the dividers among ourselves, against the revenues of the Church : the one sort objecting that a married state made the Clergy covetous, in order to the raising of their families ; and the others pretending that the revenues of the church being converted by Clergymen into temporal estates for their children, it was no sacrilege to invade that which was generally no less abused by churchmen, than it could be by laymen.

May the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls so inspire all that are the overseers of that flock, which he purchased with his own blood, that in imitation of all those glorious patterns that are in church-history, and of this in the last age, which is inferior to very few that any former age produced, they may watch over the flock of CHRIST, and so feed and govern them, that the mouths of all adversaries may be stopped, and that all differences about lesser matters being laid down, peace and truth may again flourish, and the true ends of religion and church-government may be advanced ; and that instead of biting, devouring, and consuming one another, as we do, we may all build up one another in our most holy faith.

(XXIV.)

THE LIFE
OF
ARCHBISHOP USHER:

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JAMES USHER was born in Dublin, in the parish of St. Nicholas, in the year 1580. His father, Mr. ARLAND USHER, was brought up in the study of the law, a person of excellent parts and endowments. His mother, MRS. MARGARET STANIHURST, was seduced to the Romish Religion while he was in England, whom they had in some vows so engaged, that when he came back she could not be reclaimed, to his no small grief. His grandfather by his mother's side was JAMES STANIHURST, three times Speaker of the House of Commons in Ireland: he made the first motion for the founding of a College and University in Dublin; he was Recorder of that city, one of the Masters of the Chancery, and a man of great wisdom and integrity. His uncle by his father's side was HENRY USHER, Archbishop of Armagh, a wise and learned man, who was sent over to petition QUEEN ELIZABETH for the founding of a college and university in Dublin, which he obtained; so that the college (of which this person was the sacred first-fruits) had its being by his grandfather's motion, and his uncle's effecting. He had a brother, AMBROSE USHER, who died young; a man of great abilities also, who excelled in the knowledge of the Oriental languages.—Two of his aunts, who by reason of their blindness never saw letters, taught him first to read. Their readiness in the Scripture was marvellous, being able readily to repeat any part of the Bible.

At eight years old he was sent to the grammar-school; SIR JAMES FULLERTON (who was afterwards ambassador in France, and died in a great office at Court) was his

schoolmaster. He, with SIR JAMES HAMILTON, (afterwards LORD VISCOUNT CLANDEBOISE,) who was usher of the school, were sent then out of Scotland by KING JAMES upon another design, only disguised in that employment: they came very opportunely for his founding in learning; in which he often acknowledged the providence of GOD.

At ten years old he found in him the true sense of religion, by a sermon which he heard preached upon *Rom. xii. 1.* His reading then of some notes, taken in writing from MR. PERKINS, concerning the sanctifying of the LORD's day, took so with him, that he was ever after careful to keep it. He then read in Latin ST. AUGUSTINE'S Meditations, which so moved him, that he wept often in the reading of them.

Upon the accustoming himself thus to good duties in his tender years, the Devil endeavoured to nip him in the bud, by divers sorts of terrors and affrightments, sleeping and waking, tending to the discouraging of him in the way of godliness. But he constantly applied himself to prayer, and at length was heard in that he feared, by some unusual way of support and comfort; which made such impression on him, that it was fresh in his memory in his elder years. When he could not be frightened out of that course, the Devil laid a bait of pleasure to withdraw him from it, by some of his friends teaching him to play at cards, with which he found himself so delighted, that it not only took place of the love of his book, but began to be a rival with that spiritual part in him; upon the apprehension of which, he gave it over, and never played after.

At twelve years old he was so affected with chronology and antiquity, that reading SLEIDAN on the Four Empires, and other authors, he drew out an exact series of times when each eminent person lived. In the space of five years he was perfectly instructed in grammar, rhetoric, and poetry. He excelled in poetry, with which he found himself so delighted, that he took himself from it, lest it should have taken him off from more serious studies.

At thirteen he was admitted into the College of Dublin, being the first scholar that was entered into it. And now

SIR JAMES HAMILTON, hitherto usher of the school, was chosen Fellow of the College, and so became his tutor; whom I have often heard admiring his quickness and proficiency.

At fourteen years old he was called to receive the LORD's Supper. The afternoon before, his usual custom was to sequester himself, and spend it in strict examination, and penitential humiliation of himself for his sins, which was so operative, that streams of tears ran from him; on which, as an exemplary provocation and censure of himself, he often reflected, when he became more advanced in years.

I have often heard him speak of a certain place by a water-side, whither he frequently resorted, sorrowfully to recount his sins, and with floods of tears to pour them out in the confession of them; the fruit of which he found to be so sweet to his soul, that he thirsted for all occasions of such a sequestration, and so usually on Saturdays in the afternoon it was his custom. One sin he lamented was, his too great love of human learning, that he should be as glad of Monday to go to that, as of the LORD's day for his service; it cost him many a tear, that he could not be more heavenly-minded at that age.

At fifteen he had made such a proficiency in chronology, that in Latin he drew up an exact chronicle of the Bible, as far as the Book of Kings. About that time he had a strong temptation, that GOD did not love him, because he had no outward afflictions, or troubles of conscience, occasioned by some inconsiderate expressions which he read in some writers.

Before he was Bachelor of Arts, he had read STAPLETON's "Fortress of the Faith;" and finding his confidence in asserting antiquity for the tenets of Popery, he was put to a plunge within himself: this he took for a truth, that the most ancient church must be the best. His suspicion was, that STAPLETON might misquote the Fathers, or wrest them to his own sense: hence he took up a resolution, that if GOD gave him life and health, he would read the Fathers all over; and so he began that work at twenty

years of age, and finished it at thirty-eight, strictly observing his proportion each day, whatever occasions diverted him.

But now his Father's intention to send him over hither to the Inns of Court, for the study of the Common Law, much disturbed him; yet, in obedience to his Father, he assented, and resolved on it. But, not long after, his Father died, and being then at liberty to make choice of his studies, he devoted himself to Divinity, and was chosen Fellow of the College; before which he was incapable of taking the oath then given at the admission of them, *viz.* "That the present intent of their studies should be for the profession of Divinity, unless God should afterwards otherwise dispose their minds."

Here was given another occasion of disturbance. His Father left him a very good estate in land: but finding that he must have involved himself in many suits in law before it could have been settled, to the withdrawing him from his studies, he gave it up to his brother and sisters, and suffered his Uncle to take letters of administration for that end; being in those years resolved to cast himself upon the Providence of God, to whose service in the ministry he had devoted himself, and not doubting but He would provide for him.

When he was nineteen years old, he disputed with HENRY FITZ-SYMONDS, the Jesuit, in the Castle of Dublin. He offered to dispute with him through the controversies of BELLARMINE. The first subject was *De Anti-Christo*: twice or thrice they had solemn disputations. He was ready to have proceeded; but the Jesuit was weary of it, yet gives him a tolerable commendation, and much admires his forwardness at such young years. Some of his words are, "There came once to me a youth of about eighteen years of age, one of a too soon ripe wit, scarcely, as you would think, gone through his course of philosophy, or got out of his childhood, yet ready to dispute of the most abstruse points in Divinity." And afterwards the same Jesuit, living to understand more of him, said he was *A catholicorum doctissimus*,—as an unusual, so

a tender expression. He was loth to call him a heretic, but terms him "of such as are not Catholics, the most learned."

About twenty years of age he commenced Master of Arts, and was chosen Catechist of the College, where he went through a great part of the body of Divinity in the chapel.

And now by reason of the scarcity of Preachers, (it being there then as in SAMUEL's time, "The word of God was precious,") three young men of the College were appointed to preach in Christ-Church before the State. One of them was this most learned Primate; and his part was to handle the controversies for the satisfaction of the Papists, on the LORD's day in the afternoon; which he did so perspicuously, ever concluding with matter of exhortation, that it was much for the confirmation and edification of the Protestants. But after a little space, he refused to continue it, because he had not yet received ordination; and that he also made a scruple of taking yet, on account of his defect of years, the constitutions of England requiring twenty-four, and he not yet being twenty-one; but by some of the most grave and learned men, he was told the LORD had need of him. Upon their urging him, and his age being dispensed with, he was ordained by his Uncle HENRY USHER, then Archbishop of Armagh.

The first text on which he preached publicly, after his ordination, was *Rev. iii. 1*, "Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." It fell out to be the same day with the battle of Kinsale, the Friday before Christmas-day, 1601; and it being a day specially set apart for prayer for a good success upon that engagement, and being his first-fruits in that office, might possibly be the more efficacious. He began that Epistle to the Church of Sardis then, and finished it afterwards.

The design was then known, that if the Spaniards had got the better, most of the Protestants would have been slain by the Irish Papists, both in Dublin and elsewhere, but especially the Ministers, without any distinction: hence arose a temptation in him to have deferred ordination till the event of that battle were known, whereby he should

not have been in such imminent danger ; but he repelled that motion, and resolved the rather upon it, conceiving that he should, in that office of the ministry, and for that cause, die the next door to martyrdom.

After the overthrow of the Spaniards at Kinsale, the hopes of the Irish being lost, they began to subject themselves to the statute now put in execution, in coming to church ; and for their further information in point of religion, the Lord-Lieutenant and Council desired the Ministers so to divide themselves, that in each church, on the LORD's day in the afternoon, in imitation of what he had already begun at Christ-Church, there might be a sermon for that end. A convenient church (St. Catherine's) was assigned for this reverend person, who removed accordingly, and duly observed it. His custom was to draw up the sum of what he had delivered into questions and answers ; and, on the following Sunday, persons of good esteem voluntarily offered themselves to repeat the answers before the whole congregation, which occasioned them to be the more taken notice of by the Papists.

By this his labour, and that of others of his brethren, not only in Dublin, but in other parts of the kingdom, the Papists came to church so diligently, that if they had occasion to absent themselves, they would send their excuse to the Churchwardens. But notwithstanding these good beginnings, suddenly the statute was again suspended, and the power of the High-Commission was withdrawn ; at which the Papists presently withdrew themselves again, and Popery from that time returned to a higher tide than before, and overflowed its former banks in a general deluge over the whole nation.

Upon this, the spirit of this holy and eminent person, like ST. PAUL's at Athens, was stirred within him ; and preaching before the State at Christ-Church, Dublin, upon a special solemnity, he did, with as much prudence and fortitude as might become those younger years, give them his sense of that their toleration of idolatry ; and made full and bold application of that passage in the Vision of EZEKIEL, (*chap. iv. 6,*) where the Prophet, by lying on

his side, was to bear the iniquity of Judah forty days: “I have appointed thee a day for a year, even a day for a year,” as the old translation of that Bible which he then used, reads it. This, by consent of interpreters, signifies the time of forty years to the destruction of Jerusalem, and of that nation, for their idolatry. He made then his direct application in relation to that connivance of Popery, *viz.* “From this year will I reckon the sin of Ireland, that those whom you now embrace shall be your ruin, and you shall bear this iniquity.”

Having since had occasion further to consider it, we found that there were, from the year 1601, forty years to the late rebellion and destruction of Ireland, in the year 1641, done by those Papists, and Popish Priests, who were connived at. He had reserved the notes of that sermon, with the dates of the year and day on which he preached it; and it is the more observable, for it was one of the last which he wrote throughout word for word; afterwards, without writing any thing but the heads, he put his meditations wholly upon the strength of his memory, and GOD’S assistance.

This is a very observable passage; and if it may be conceived to be a prophetic impulse in those years, he was the more like to SAMUEL, who in his youth was sent with a similar message to ELI, relating the ruin of his native country, “That the LORD would do such a thing in Israel, that whosoever heard it, both his ears should tingle.” And what a continued expectation he had of a judgment upon his native country, I can witness from the year 1624, when I had the happiness first to be known to him; and the nearer the time every year, the more confident he was,—to my admiration, there being nothing visibly tending to the fear of it.

After this, he constantly came over to England once in three years, and thus he spent the summer:—one month at Oxford; another at Cambridge; (searching the books, but especially the manuscripts, of each University;) the third month at London, attending chiefly SIR THOMAS COTTON’S library, and conversing with learned men, with whom in those younger years he was in great esteem. And

in after years, there was scarcely a choice book in any eminent person's library, in France, Italy, Germany, or Rome, but he had his way to have it, or what he desired transcribed : and he was better acquainted with the Pope's Vatican, than some who were its daily visitors.

The first church-preferment he had, was the Chancellorship of St. Patrick's, Dublin, unto which he took no other benefice. In this dignity the law might have excused him from preaching, excepting only sometimes, in his course, before the State ; yet he would not omit it to the place from whence he received the profits, but went thither in person, *viz.* to Finglas, a mile from Dublin, and preached there every LORD'S day, unless upon extraordinary occasions he were detained ; and in having been a constant Preacher, he took in his elder years more comfort than in all his other labours and writings.

His experiences in prayer were many, and very observable in the return of his desires in kind, and that immediately, when he had been in some distresses ; and the Providence of GOD in taking care of him in his younger years, as he did often recount, confirmed his dependence upon him in these his elder.

When he was twenty-seven years old, in the year 1607, he commenced Bachelor of Divinity, and immediately after was chosen Professor of Divinity in the University of Dublin.

In the year 1612, he proceeded Doctor of Divinity : one of his lectures, *pro gradu*, was on the Seventy Weeks to the slaying of the MESSIAH ; (*Dan.* ix. 24 ;) the other (*Rev.* xx. 4) concerning the sense of " The saints reigning with CHRIST a thousand years."

In the year 1613, he published that book "*De Ecclesiarum Christianarum Successione et Statu*," magnified by CASAUBON and SCULTETUS, in their Greek and Latin verses before it. It was solemnly presented by ARCHBISHOP ABBOT to KING JAMES, as the eminent first-fruits of the College of Dublin.

In the year 1615, there was a Parliament in Dublin, and a Convocation of the Clergy, when those learned Articles of Ireland were composed and published, which he, being a member of the Synod, was appointed to draw up.

They were highly approved by the most orthodox Divines. I know no cause of some men's speaking against them, unless for that they determine, according to ST. AUGUSTINE'S *Doctrine against the Pelagians*, "the man of sin" (2 *Thes.* ii.) to be the Bishop of Rome, and the Morality of the Sabbath; of both which, this most learned Primate was very confident, and wished that some learned men of late had spared their pens to the contrary.

And now he wanted not enemies in scandalizing him to KING JAMES, under the title of a Puritan, to prevent any further promotion of him. But it so fell out, that this was the occasion of his advancement; for KING JAMES, being in some fear of him upon that score by the eminency of his learning, fell into some full discourse with him, and received such abundant satisfaction of the soundness of his judgment and piety, that, notwithstanding the opposition of great ones, without his seeking, he made him Bishop of Meath in Ireland, and, as I have heard, did often boast, that "he was a Bishop of his own making." But the misinterpretations which some of his enemies had raised and spread of him moved him voluntarily to declare his judgment, as to the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England, which was to the satisfaction of all good men.

He did not now slacken in his constancy of preaching, but bound himself the rather to it, by the motto of his episcopal seal, *Væ mihi si non evangelizavero*; which he continued in the seal of his primacy also.

While he was in England, PRIMATE HAMPTON dying, he was made, in the year 1624, Primate of Ireland, the hundredth Bishop of that see, from the first, supposed to be PATRICIUS, who lived in ST. AUGUSTINE'S time, four hundred years after CHRIST, of whom we read much in divers ancient writers. And this reverend Primate, in his book called "The Religion of the Ancient Irish," hath made it appear very probable, that the doctrine which ST. PATRICK planted, and preached among them at first, was the same now professed by us.

When he was thus promoted to the highest rank which his profession allowed, in his native country, he was the more humble and laborious in preaching. And it so fell

out, that, for some weeks together, preaching beyond his strength, to the over-much wasting of his spirits, at the request of some Ministers in Essex that he would preach upon the week-days, he fell into a quartan ague, which held him three quarters of a year.

After his recovery, the LORD MORDAUNT, afterwards EARL of PETERBOROUGH, being a Papist, and desirous to draw his Lady to the same religion, was willing that there should be a meeting of two prime men of each party, to dispute what might be in controversy between them. The Lady made choice of the Lord Primate, and prevailed with him, though newly recovered, and scarcely able to take that journey. The Jesuit chosen by the Earl, went under the name of BEAUMOND, but his real name was ROOKWOOD; and he was the brother of AMBROSE ROOKWOOD, one of the conspirators of the Gunpowder-Treason, who was executed. The place of meeting was at Drayton, in Northamptonshire, where there was a great library, so that no books of the ancient Fathers were wanting for their view. The points proposed were concerning Transubstantiation, Invocation of Saints, Images, and the Visibility of the Church. Three days were spent in disputations, but the conclusion was this: after the third day, the Lord Primate hitherto having been opponent, and now the Jesuit taking that part upon him, and my Lord that of respondent, that morning about the time he was expected, he excused his coming to the Earl, saying, "That all the arguments he had framed in his own head, and which, he thought, he had as perfect as his *Pater-noster*, he had forgotten, and could not recover them again; that he believed it was the just judgment of God upon him, thus to desert him in the defence of his cause, for undertaking of himself to dispute with a man of that eminency and learning, without the licence of his Superior." Whereupon the Earl, upon some further discourse with this Lord Primate, was converted, and became a Protestant, and so continued to the last. Upon this, the COUNTESS of PETERBOROUGH owed him a great respect; and upon his losses in Ireland, and other distresses here, she took him to her own house. He lived with her about nine or ten years, and died there.

In the year 1626, in August, he returned into Ireland, where he was received with all the expressions of joy that could be given.

The discourses which daily fell from him at his table, on the clearing of difficulties in the Scripture, and other subjects, were of great advantage to those who were capable of understanding them. They put me often in mind of that speech of the Queen of Sheba to SOLOMON, "Happy are these thy servants that continually stand about thee, and hear thy wisdom."

The order observed in his family, as to prayer, was four times a day ; in the morning at six, in the evening at eight, and before dinner and supper in the chapel ; at all of which he was always present. On Friday, in the afternoon, an hour was constantly spent in the chapel in going through the principles of religion, for the instruction of the family. And every Sunday evening, we had a repetition of his sermon.

In Michaelmas Term, in the year 1626, propositions were made by the Papists for a more full toleration of their religion, *viz.* the maintenance of five hundred horse, and five thousand foot, wherein the Protestants must have borne some share also ; for the consideration of which a great assembly of the whole nation, Papists and Protestants, was called in the Lord-Deputy FALKLAND's time.

The Bishops, by the Lord Primate's invitation, met at his house ; and he and they unanimously subscribed a Protestation against the toleration of Popery, which is as followeth :

"The religion of the Papists is superstitious and idolatrous ; their faith and doctrine erroneous and heretical ; their church, in respect of both, apostatical. To give them therefore a toleration, or to consent that they may freely exercise their religion, and profess their faith and doctrine, is a grievous sin, and that in two respects :

"For, 1. It is to make ourselves accessory not only to their superstitions, idolatries, heresies, and, in a word, to all the abominations of Popery ; but also (which is a consequent of the former) to the perdition of the seduced people, which perish in the deluge of the Catholic Apostasy.

"2. To grant them toleration, in respect of any money,

or contribution to be made by them, is to set religion to sale, and with it the souls of the people whom CHRIST our SAVIOUR hath redeemed with his most precious blood. And as it is a great sin, so also a matter of dangerous consequence; the consideration whereof we commend to the wise and judicious: beseeching the jealous GOD of truth to make them who are in authority zealous of GOD's glory, and of the advancement of true religion; zealous, resolute, and courageous against all superstition and idolatry. Amen."

JAMES, *Armachanus.*

ANDREW, *Alachadens.*

MAL. *Caschellen.*

THOMAS, *Kilmore & Ardagh.*

ANTH. *Medensis.*

THEOPHILUS, *Dromore.*

THO. *Hernes. & Laughlin.*

MICHAEL, *Waterford and*

Ro. Dunensis, &c.

Lismore.

GEORGE, *Derens.*

FRANCIS, *Limerick.*

RICHARD, *Cork, Cloyne, Ross.*

And here let me give you some of his exemplary injunctions. Every LORD's day he preached in the forenoon, in which he spent himself much. In the afternoon, this was his order to me, that, besides the catechising of the youth before public prayers, I should, after the first and second lesson, spend about half an hour in a brief and plain exposition of the principles of religion in the public Catechism; and after that I was to preach. First, he directed me to go through the Creed at once, giving but the sum of each article; the next time at thrice; and afterwards, each time an article, as they might be more able to bear it; and so proportionably the Ten Commandments, the LORD's Prayer, and the doctrine of the Sacraments. The good fruit of this was apparent in the common people, upon their approach to the Communion, when, as by the then order, the names of the receivers were to be given in, so some account was constantly taken of their fitness for it. His order throughout his diocese to the Ministers was, to go through the Body of Divinity once a year. When a public fast was enjoined, he kept it very strictly, and preached always first himself, at least continuing two hours, and more than ordinarily extending himself in prayer.

His expenses were much in books : he first procured the Samaritan Bible, which is only the Pentateuch, to the view of these Western parts.

It would seem incredible if I were to relate how, many years ago, he did confidently foretell the changes that have come to pass in these dominions, and the poverty he expected himself, as he said often, in the midst of his plenty.

Some have much observed that text which he took at St. Mary's in Cambridge, in the year 1625, on the late King's day, and the first annual solemnity of it ; (1 *Sam.* xii. 25 ;) " But if ye still do wickedly, you shall be consumed, both you and your king." Others have remarked the last text he preached on at Court immediately before his return into Ireland ; (1 *Cor.* xiv. 33 ;) " God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints : " His application to the confusions and divisions, which he was confident were at the doors, was then observed.

He hath often acknowledged, that sometimes that which he hath resolved in his sermon not to utter, was like JEREMIAH's fire shut up in his bones, so that he could not forbear reproving the greatest : even before kings he was not ashamed. And his preaching was with authority ; he " withstood to the face " any toleration of Popery and superstition, by whomsoever attempted. At hearing him I have thought of that speech in the Psalms, " The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up."

I remember a speech of his, in the year 1624, which he hath often confirmed : " That he was persuaded the greatest stroke to the Reformed Church was to come yet ; and that the time of the utter ruin of the See of Rome should be, when she thought herself most secure ; according to that boast of Babylon at her destruction, (*Rev.* xviii. 7,) which he thought to be meant of the same, " She shall say, I sit as a Queen, and shall see no more sorrow."

His farewell sermon, in or very near the place where he had lived and preached in England, was much observed ; the text of which was, (*James* i. 15,) " Sin, when it is finished, brings forth death." His strong application of it to the fulness of the sins of this nation, which certainly would bring forth destruction, (which subject he further

illustrated by the “Angel putting in his sickle;” when the “harvest was ripe,”—by the “ephah” filled with wickedness, in the vision recorded in *Zech. v.*,—and by the case of the Amorites, destroyed when their iniquities were full,) much affected the auditory.

The last time he was in London, he did much lament the deadly hatred kindling in the hearts of men one against another, by the several opinions in matters of religion; some of them in opposition to a Ministry, and contemning the Sacraments; others spreading damnable doctrines, heresies, and blasphemies. He was confident, that the enemy which had sown those divisions up and down the nation, were Priests, Friars, and Jesuits, sent out of their seminaries from beyond seas, in other disguises; who, by their numbers multiplying in London and elsewhere, expected a great harvest; and who, he was persuaded, if not timely weeded out, would either lead to Popery, or massacres, or both. He added, how willing he was, if God so pleased, to be taken away before that evil to come.

Now, it is not improbable that so great a prophet, so sanctified from his youth, so knowing and eminent, might have, at some special times, more than ordinary impulses, in doing the watchman's part by giving warning of judgments approaching.

In the year 1640, he came out of Ireland hither, being invited by some eminent persons, upon occasion of the difference between the King and Parliament; and of this I take notice, as God's special providence for his preservation, it being the year before the rebellion of Ireland. At taking leave of him, I cannot forget the serious preparative he gave me against the heavy sorrows and miseries I should see before I saw him again, and with so much confidence, as if it had been within view: it put me in mind of that declaration in *Amos iii. 7*, “Surely the Lord will do nothing, but he will reveal it to his servants the Prophets.”

In the first year of the rebellion of Ireland, 1641, his library was with us at Drogheda, when we were besieged four months by the Irish rebels, and when they made no question of devouring us. The Priests and Friars without,

talked much of the prize they should have in it ; but the barbarous multitude spake of burning it, and me by the flame of the books, instead of faggots : it pleased God, however, in answer of our prayers and fasting, wonderfully to deliver us and it out of their hands ; and so the whole, with all his manuscripts, were sent to him that summer at Chester.

The sufferings which he now endured were many. All his personal estate, and whatever else belonged to his primacy in Ireland, were destroyed ; only at present he was preacher at Covent-Garden church.

Upon his losses in Ireland, and straits here, two offers were made him from foreign nations : one was from CARDINAL RICHLIEU, only in relation to his eminent learning, proposing to him a large maintenance, and liberty to live where he pleased in France with the Protestants ; the other from the Hollanders, offering him the place of Professor at Leyden, which had an ample stipend ; but he refused both.

And now, by the disturbances of the times, he was perpetually removing, having, with ST. PAUL, “no certain dwelling-place.” The saying of DAVID was often in his thoughts, “Thou tellest my wanderings ; put thou my tears into thy bottle.” Some of those evidences which ST. PAUL produceth to approve himself to be the Minister of CHRIST, (2 Cor. vi.) were applicable to him ; of which he was often put in mind by learned men of other churches.

In 1642, he obtained leave of both Houses of Parliament to go to Oxford for his study. In the year 1644, the King coming thither, he preached before him, November 5. The text was *Nehem.* iv. 11 : “And our adversaries said, They shall not know, neither see, till we come in the midst among them, and slay them, and cause the works to cease.” It was a most apt text for the day ; but one passage in his sermon, against the Papists, advising not to repose any trust in them, because upon the first opportunity they would serve us here as they did the poor Protestants in Ireland, offended some persons there attending.

In March following, he went from thence into Wales, to Cardiff in Glamorganshire, and abode with his daughter.

In 1645, on Sept. 16, he removed thence to St. Donnet's, (the LADY STRADLING'S,) when by the way he was barbarously used by some soldiers; who pulled him off his horse, broke open two of his trunks full of books, and took all away; amongst which he lost two Manuscripts of the History of the Waldenses, which he never got again: most of the other books were restored, by the Preachers exhorting all ranks, in their sermons, to that end.

Not long afterwards, he fell into a painful sickness, and bled four days together, so that all hope of life was gone: but he recovered, and in 1646 he came to London.

After some time he was chosen Preacher to the Honourable Society of Lincoln's-Inn, where he continued divers years with great honour and respect, till, having lost his sight and strength, he was advised to forbear, and reserve the remainder of his spirits, like PAUL the aged, to the writing of his books, yet expected. No spectacles could help him; only when the sun shined, he could see at a window, which he hourly followed from room to room; in winter, the window was often open for him to write at. The next winter he intended to have an amanuensis; but GOD was pleased to prevent it, by taking him to the sight of himself.

After he left Lincoln's-Inn, he was prevailed with to preach in several places;—at Gray's-Inn on Nov. 5, 1654; at the Temple, on occasion of MR. SELDEN's funeral; and at two other places in the City, both which latter sermons were very effectual in the conversion of divers persons that came unto him: and indeed, seldom did that sword, drawn by him, return empty. The last sermon which he preached was at Hammersmith, about the Michaelmas preceding his death.

He told me how much he was troubled, that he found himself unable to continue preaching: his dreams were on it; and though he had been about fifty-five years a Preacher, and so, like the Levites, might well be excused from the service of the sanctuary, only employing himself in directing others, yet he had resolved to have returned to it again, in the following summer.

He never sought great things for himself. In his pecu-

niary distresses, occasioned by his losses in Ireland, the Parliament for some years had been bountiful to him in an annual stipend ; but this was suspended during the last two years of their sitting. After the dissolution of the Parliament, the care of him was renewed by the Lord-Protector ; by whose order a competent allowance was given him.

All who knew him found him very communicative, not only of his studies, but of what he had out of his stipend, to persons in want.

He was not wanting, with ST. PAUL, to magnify his office, which may be seen and read of all men ; but he did it without partiality. He was not so severe as to disown the ministry of other Reformed Churches ; but declared, that he did love and honour them as true members of the Church Universal, and was ready, both for the Ministers of Holland and France, to testify his communion with them.

"He was a man of most exemplary moderation, meekness, humility, and ingenuity. In the year 1641, he drew up an expedient, by way of accommodation in some ecclesiastical affairs, which some moderate persons of each party were ready to subscribe.

In matters of doctrine, for substantials, it was often his charge not to preach any thing as pleasing men, but God, who hath put us in trust : that in so seeking to please men, we should not be the servants of CHRIST. In the defence of which truths of doctrine, no man was more resolute and constant, not giving place by way of subjection, no, not for an hour. But he thought the case was altered in circumstantials ; and that it was our duty, with ST. PAUL, "to please all men, and not ourselves, in all such things," to edification and concord.

In a word, he was without "wavering," always one and the same, "holding fast the form of sound words," and walking in the "old paths and good way ;" and "there is none that hath drunk the old wine, that straightway desires new ; for he saith, The old is better."

The night before he left London, he uttered, with tears, many humble expressions of his own unworthiness, and demeaned himself as if he had been the least of saints : it

wrought much upon us, who found ourselves so far beneath him. He did then, as he had often before, wish us to prepare for afflictions and trials, which he was persuaded were not far from us. And the next morning, being Feb. 13th, 1655, I took my last leave of him; and he returned to Ryegate to the COUNTESS of PETERBOROUGH'S.

The day on which he first sickened, March 20th, he had spent mostly at his study: he went from thence to visit a gentlewoman sick in the house, and gave her most holy advices for three quarters of an hour, in such a heavenly manner, as if, like Moses upon Mount Nebo, his eyes had been then strengthened to the sight of that celestial Canaan; or as if, with ST. PAUL in his rapture, he had been within the gate of heaven, to which he was now nearer than he was aware.

That night, about eight o'clock, he first complained of his hip, judging it to be a touch of the sciatica, which, about thirty-five years before, he had brought on by sitting up late in the College-library of Dublin. He was relieved from this by the use of medicine, and took some rest that night. In the morning he complained of a great pain in his side. A physician was sent for; but the pain continuing, and his spirits decaying, he applied himself to prayer, and, upon the abatement of the torture, employed himself in advising those about him to provide in their health for death, that then they might have nothing else to do but to die, the approach of which event to himself he received with great content.

In prayer he had the assistance of a Minister, but afterwards desired to be left to himself. The last words he was heard to utter, in praying for forgiveness of sins, were these, "But, LORD, in special, forgive my sins of omission." In general, he had his wish, which I have often heard him make, that he might die like MR. PERKINS, crying for mercy and forgiveness.

With this humble expression expired this holy man of GOD, this DANIEL, greatly beloved;—a speech which may be a lesson to us all, and give us, to our last, matter of solemn meditation and imitation.



EXTRACTS
FROM
THE LETTERS
OF
MR. SAMUEL RUTHERFOORD.



VOL. VI.

I

TO

THE CHRISTIAN READER.

CHRISTIAN READER,

LITTLE need have MR. RUTHERFOORD'S Letters of any man's Epistle-Commendatory ; his great Master, whom he served with his spirit in the Gospel of his SON, having given them one, written by his own hand on the heart of every one who is become his epistle, and savours the things of GOD, and hath experienced those rare, those most refreshing, yea and, beyond all expression, ravishing emanations of the love of GOD upon the soul, which produce the emanations of its love back again upon Him, who shed abroad his love in the heart ; a thing as much and manifestly exemplified in these epistles, as in any piece which the world hath yet seen, or this day can show. For, in each of these, thou mayest perceive how the writer's heart is inflamed with a holy fire, and how his soul ascends, as if snatched up to heaven, and caught up above all that is below GOD. O how much is what drops from his pen above the ordinary attainments even of such as seem to have out-run others ! So that in respect of us, this Angel of the Church speaks as one standing already in the choir of Angels, or as an Angel come down from heaven among men, to give us some account of what they are doing above !

Thus leaving thee to peruse what is made public for thy edification, and wishing thee an experimental knowledge of that surpassing and inconceivable sweetness, which is in the fruition of **GOD**, and in a fellowship with the **FATHER** and with his **SON JESUS CHRIST**; (without which, while he speaks as coming forth out of the King's banqueting-house, to persuade thee to go in thither and feast, he will be to thee a Barbarian ;) I shall only wish and beg, that thou wouldest seriously seek of **GOD** the same thing for him, who seeks this for thee, and who hath his design in the pains taken in publishing these Letters, if thou be thereby provoked to seek till thou find. This is that adequate recompense which he seeks, earnestly entreats, and expects, who is

Thy soul's well-wisher,

And servant in **CHRIST JESUS**.

MR. RUTHERFOORD'S LETTERS.

TO THE VISCOUNTESS OF KENMURE.

MADAM,

I HAVE heard of your Ladyship's sickness, with grief; yet I trust ye have learned to say, "It is the LORD, let him do what seemeth good in his eyes." It is now many years since the apostate Angels made a question, whether their will or the will of their Creator should be done; and, since that time, froward mankind hath always in that suit compeered to plead with them against GOD, in repining against his will. But the LORD, being both party and judge, hath obtained a decree, and saith, (*Isa.* xlv. 10,) "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." It is then best for us, in the obedience of faith, and in a holy submission, to give that to GOD, which the law of his almighty and just power will have of us. Therefore, Madam, your LORD willeth you, in all states of life, to say, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." And herein shall ye have comfort, that He, who seeth perfectly through all your evils, and knoweth the frame and constitution of your nature, and what is most healthful for your soul, holdeth every cup of affliction to your head with his own gracious hand. Never believe that your tender-hearted SAVIOUR will mix that cup with one dram of poison. Drink then with the patience of the saints; and the patience of GOD bless your physic! I have heard your Ladyship complain of deadness, and want

of the power of the life of GOD ; but courage ! He who walked in the garden, and made a noise that made ADAM hear his voice, will also at some times walk in your soul, and make you hear a more sweet word. Yet ye will not always hear the noise of his feet when he walketh. Ye are at such a time like JACOB mourning at the supposed death of JOSEPH, when JOSEPH was living. The image of the Second ADAM is living in you ; and yet ye are mourning at the supposed death of the life of CHRIST in you. EPHRAIM is bemoaning and mourning, (*Jer.* xxxi.) when he thinketh GOD is far off, and heareth not ; and yet GOD is like the Bridegroom, (*Cant.* ii.) standing only behind a thin wall, and laying to his ear ; for he saith himself, (*ver.* 18,) “ I have surely heard EPHRAIM bemoaning himself.” I have good confidence, Madam, that CHRIST JESUS, whom your soul through forests and mountains is seeking, is within you : and yet I speak not this to lay a pillow under your head, or to dissuade you from a holy fear of the loss of CHRIST, or of provoking and stirring up the Beloved, before he please, by sin. I know, in spiritual confidence, the Devil will come in, as in all other good works, and so endeavour to bring you under a fearful sleep, till He whom your soul loveth be departed from the door, and have left off knocking ; and therefore, here the SPIRIT of GOD must hold your soul's feet in the golden mid-line betwixt confident resting in the arms of CHRIST, and drowsy sleeping in the bed of fleshly security. Therefore, so count little of yourself, that ye count not also little of GOD in the course of his mercy. For there be many Christians, like young sailors, who think the shore and the whole land doth move, when the ship and they themselves are moved : just so, not a few imagine that GOD moveth, and faileth, and changeth places, because their giddy souls are under sail, and subject to alteration ; but “ the foundation of the LORD abideth sure.” GOD knoweth that ye are his own : wrestle, fight, go forward, watch, fear, believe, pray ; and then ye have the infallible symptoms of one of the elect of CHRIST within you. Ye

have now sickness before you; and after that, death; gather then food for the journey. **GOD** give you eyes to see through sickness and death, and to see something beyond death! I doubt not but if hell were betwixt you and **CHRIST**, as a river which ye must cross before ye could come at him, but ye would willingly put in your foot, and make through to be at him, upon hope that he would come in himself, in the deepest of the river, and lend you his hand. Now I believe your hell is dried up, and ye have only these two shallow brooks, sickness and death, to pass through; and ye have also a promise that **CHRIST** shall do more than meet you, even that he shall come himself and go with you foot for foot, yea; and bear you in his arms. O then! for the joy that is set before you, for the love of the *Man* (who is also “**GOD** over all, blessed for ever”) that is standing upon the shore to welcome you, run your race with patience. The **LORD** go with you! Your **LORD** will not have you, nor any of his servants, to exchange for the worse. Death in itself includeth both the death of the soul, and the death of the body; but to **GOD**'s children the bounds of death are abridged, and drawn into a more narrow compass: so that, when ye die, a piece of death shall only seize upon you, and that is the dissolution of the body; for in **CHRIST** ye are delivered from the second death; and therefore, that serpent, sin, shall but eat your earthly part. As for your soul, it is above the law of death. Not willing to weary your Ladyship further, I commend you, now and always, to the grace and mercy of that **GOD**, who is able to keep you, that ye fall not. The **LORD JESUS** be with your spirit!

Your Ladyship's servant

Anwoth,
July 27, 1628.

At all dutiful obedience in **CHRIST**,
S. R.

TO THE PARISHIONERS OF KILMACOLME.

Worthy and well-beloved in CHRIST JESUS our LORD,

GRACE, mercy, and peace be to you ! Your letters could not come to my hand in a greater throng of business than I am now pressed with ; yet I cannot but answer both. 1. I would not have you fix upon me, as the man able by letters to answer doubts of this kind, while there are, in your bounds, men of such great parts, most able for this work. I know the best are unable ; yet it pleaseth the SPIRIT of JESUS to blow his sweet wind through a dry stick, that the empty reed may keep no glory to itself. 2. Know that the wind of this SPIRIT hath a time when it bloweth sharp, and presseth so strongly, that it would blow through an iron door : and this is commonly rather under suffering for CHRIST, than at any other time. Sick children get CHRIST'S pleasant things ; because JESUS is most tender of the sufferer, for he was a sufferer himself. O, if I had but the leavings of a sufferer's table !—But I leave this to answer yours.

First, Ye write, that God's vows are lying on you, and security stealing on you who are weak.—I answer, 1. Nature is a sluggard, and loveth not the labour of religion ; therefore rest should not be taken, till we know the disease to be over : and the calms of faith, of victory over corruption, should be entertained in the place of security ; so that, if I sleep, I would desire to sleep faith's sleep, in CHRIST'S bosom. 2. Know also, none that sleep sound can seriously complain of sleepiness. Sorrow for a slumbering soul is a token of some watchfulness of spirit. But this is soon turned into wantonness ; therefore our waking must be watched over, else sleep will even grow out of watching ; and there is as much need to watch over grace, as to watch over sin. Full men will soon sleep, and sooner than hungry men. 3. For your weakness to keep off the security which stealeth upon you, I would say two things :—(1.) To want complaints of weakness, is for

CHRIST your Minister. He can woo a soul at a dike-side in the field. He needeth not us, although the flock be obliged to seek him in the shepherds' tents. Hunger of CHRIST's making may thrive, even under stewards who mind not the feeding of the flock. O blessed soul, that can leap over man; and look above a pulpit to CHRIST, who can preach home to the heart, although we were all dead and rotten.

Fourthly, So to complain of yourself, as to justify GOD, is right; providing ye justify his SPIRIT in yourself: but I advise you to speak good of CHRIST for his beauty and sweetness, and speak good of him for his grace to yourselves.

Fifthly, Light remaineth, ye say, but ye cannot attain to painfulness. While we are here, light is in the most part broader and longer than obedience. But if there be sorrow for coming short of performance, our honest sorrow and sincere aims, together with CHRIST's intercession, pleading that GOD would welcome that which we have, and forgive that which we have not, will not be in vain.

Sixthly, In CHRIST's absence, there is (as ye write) a willingness to use means, but heaviness after the use of them, because of the formal and slight performance. In CHRIST's absence, I confess, the work lieth behind; but if ye mean absence of [abounding] comfort, I think that absence is CHRIST's trying us, not simply our sin against him: But if ye mean, by absence of CHRIST, the withdrawing of his working grace, I see not how willingness to use means can be at all under such an absence. Therefore, be humbled for heaviness in that obedience, and thankful for willingness. I also recommend to you heaviness for formality, and for deadness in obedience: Be cast down, as much as ye will or can, for deadness; and challenge that slow and dull carcase of sin, that will neither lead nor drive in your spiritual obedience.

Seventhly, Ye hold, that CHRIST must either have hearty service, or no service at all. If ye mean, he will not halve a heart, or have feigned service, I grant you that. CHRIST must have honesty or nothing: But if ye

mean that he will have no service at all, where the heart draweth back in any measure; I would not that were true, for my part of heaven, and all that I am worth in the world. If ye mind to walk to heaven without a cramp or a crook, I fear ye must go alone. He knoweth our dross and defects: and JE-SUS pitieth us, when weakness and deadness are our cross, and not our darling. Yet I judge it not unlawful to seek renewed consolations: Provided, 1. That the heart be submissive, and content to leave the measure and timing of them to him: 2. That they be sought to excite us to praise, and strengthen our assurance, and sharpen our desires after himself: 3. That they be sought, not for our humours or the swelling of nature, but as an earnest of heaven. And, I think, many attain to greater consolations after mortifications, than ever they had formerly. But I know our LORD walketh here still by a sovereign latitude, and keepeth not the same way towards all his children. The rich grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST be with you all.

Anwoth,
Aug. 5, 1629.

Yours in his sweet LORD JESUS,

S. R.



TO MY LADY KENMURE.

MADAM,

SALUTING your Ladyship with grace and mercy from GOD our FATHER, and from our LORD JESUS CHRIST; —I was sorry at my departure, leaving your Ladyship in grief; and would still be grieved at it, if I were not assured that ye have one with you in the furnace, whose visage is like unto the SON of GOD. I am glad that you have been acquainted from your youth with the wrestlings of GOD, and that ye are cast from furnace to furnace; knowing that, if ye were not dear to GOD, he would not spend so much physic upon you. All the brethren and sisters of CHRIST must be conformed to his image in

Heaven, and Angels that never sinned ; not for Christians in CHRIST's camp on earth. No man should rejoice at weakness and diseases ; but I think we may have a sort of gladness at boils and sores, because, without them, CHRIST's fingers, as a slain LORD, should never have touched our skin. I dare not thank myself, but I dare thank GOD's depths of wise providence, that I have an errand in me for CHRIST to come and visit me, and bring with him his balm. O how sweet is it for a sinner to put his weakness in CHRIST's strengthening hand ; and to father a sick soul upon such a Physician ; and to lay weakness before him, to weep upon him, and to plead and pray ! Weakness can speak and cry when we have not a tongue ; (*Ezek.* xvi. 6 ;) .. And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee, when thou wast in thy blood, Live." The Church could not speak one word to CHRIST then ; but blood and guiltiness spake, and drew out of CHRIST pity, and a word of life and love. (2.) For weakness, we have it, that we may employ CHRIST's strength because of our weakness. Weakness is to make us the strongest things ; that is, when having no strength of our own, we are carried upon CHRIST's shoulders. If our weakness swell up to the clouds, CHRIST's strength will swell up to the sun, and above the heaven of heavens.

Secondly, Ye tell me, that there is need of counsel for strengthening new beginners. I can say little to that, who am not well begun myself ; but I know, honest beginnings are nourished by Him, who never yet put out a poor man's dim candle, wrestling betwixt light and darkness. I am sure, if new beginners would urge themselves upon CHRIST, and press their souls upon him, they could not come wrong to CHRIST.

Thirdly, Whereas ye complain of a dead ministry, remember that the Bible among you is the contract of marriage ; and the manner of CHRIST's conveying his love to your heart is not so absolutely dependent upon even lively preaching, as that there is no conversion at all, no life of GOD, but that which is tied to a man's lips. Make

suffering; and some do more closely resemble the copy than others. Think, Madam, that it is a part of your glory to be enrolled among those, whom one of the elders (*Rev.* vii. 14) pointed out to JOHN, "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the lamb." Behold your Fore-runner going out of the world, all in a lake of blood; and it is not ill to do as he did. Fulfil with joy in your body the remnant of the afflictions of CHRIST. Ye have lost a child: nay, she is not lost to you, who is found to CHRIST; she is not sent away, but only sent before,—like a star, which, going out of our sight, doth not die and vanish, but shineth in another hemisphere: ye see her not, yet she doth shine in another country. If her glass was but a short hour, what she wanteth of Time, that she hath gotten of Eternity.—Build your nest upon no tree here: for ye see GOD hath sold the forest to death; and every tree, whereupon we would rest, is ready to be cut down, to the end that we may flee and mount up, and build upon the rock, and dwell in the holes of the rock. What ye love besides JESUS, your husband, is an adulterous lover. Now it is GOD's special blessing to JUDAH, that he will not let her find her paths in following her strange lovers; (*Hos.* ii. 6, 7;) "Therefore, behold, I will hedge up her way with thorns, and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths." And "She shall follow after her lovers, but she shall not overtake them." O thrice happy JUDAH, when GOD buildeth a stone wall betwixt her and the fire of hell! The world and the things of the world, are the lover ye naturally affect, beside your own husband, CHRIST. The hedge of thorns, and the wall which GOD buildeth in your way, to hinder you from this lover, are the thorny edge of daily grief, loss of children, weakness of body, iniquity of the times, uncertainty of estate, lack of worldly comfort, and fear of GOD's anger for old unrepented sins. What lose ye, if GOD twist the hedge daily thicker? GOD be blessed, the LORD will not let you find your paths. Return to your first husband.

Do not weary, neither think that death walketh towards you with a slow pace ; ye must be riper before ye be shaken. Your days are no longer than **JOB**'s, that were "swifter than a post, and passed away as the ships of desire, and as the eagle that hasteth for the prey." (*Job* ix. 25, 26.) There is less sand in your glass now than there was yesternight ; this span-length of ever-posting time will soon be ended. But the greater is the mercy of God, the more years ye get to advise upon what terms ye cast your soul into the huge gulf of never-ending eternity. The **LORD** hath told you what ye should be doing till he come : "Wait and hasten (saith **ST. PETER**) for the coming of our **LORD**." All is night that is here, in respect of ignorance and daily ensuing troubles, one always making way to another, as the ninth wave of the sea to the tenth ; therefore sigh and long for the dawning of that morning, and 'the breaking of that day of the coming of the **SON OF MAN**, when the shadows shall flee away. Persuade yourself that the King is coming. Read his letter sent before him, (*Rev.* iii. 11,) "Behold, I come quickly." Wait with the wearied night-watch for the breaking of the eastern sky, and think that ye have not a morrow ; as the wise father said, who, being invited against to-morrow to dine with his friends, answered, "Those many days, I had no morrow at all." I am loth to weary you : show yourself a Christian, by suffering without murmuring, for which sin fourteen thousand seven hundred were slain. (*Num.* xvi. 49.) In patience possess your soul. They lose nothing, who gain **CHRIST**. I commend you to the mercy and grace of our **LORD JESUS**, assuring you that your day is coming, and that **GOD**'s mercy is abiding you. The **LORD JESUS** be with your Spirit.

Anwoth,
Jan. 15, 1629.

Yours in the **LORD JESUS**,
At all dutiful obedience,

S. R.

TO MARION MACKNAUGHT.

WELL-BELOVED AND DEAR SISTER,

I UNDERSTAND you are still under the LORD's visitation, with your enemies ; which is GOD's dealing. Till He take his children out of the furnace, who alone knoweth how long they should be tried, there is no deliverance ; but after the sea of trouble is gone over the souls of his children, then comes the gracious ebbing, and drying up of the waters. Dear Sister, do not faint ; the wicked may hold the bitter cup to your head, but GOD mixeth it, and there is no poison in it : they strike, but GOD moves the rod : SHIMEI curseth, but it is because the LORD bids him. I tell you, and I have it from Him before whom I stand, there is a decree given out, in the great court of heaven, that your present troubles shall be dispersed as the morning-cloud, and GOD shall bring forth your righteousness as the light at noon of day. Let me entreat you, in CHRIST's name, to keep a good conscience in your proceedings in that matter, and beware of yourself ; yourself is a more dangerous enemy than I, or any without you. Innocence, and an upright cause, are a good advocate before GOD, and shall plead for you, and win your cause. Count much of your Master's approbation. He is now as the King that is gone to a far country. GOD seems to be from home ; (if I may say so ;) yet he sees the ill servants, who say, " Our Master deferreth his coming." Patience, my beloved, CHRIST the King is coming home ; the evening is at hand ; and he will ask an account of his servants. Make a fair and clear account to him. So carry yourself, as that at night you may say, " Master, I have wronged none ; behold, you have your own with advantage." Your soul then will esteem much the testimony of a good conscience. O thrice happy shall your soul be then, when GOD finds you covered with nothing but the white robe of the saints' innocence, and the righteousness of JESUS CHRIST.

Put on love, and brotherly-kindness, and long-suffering ; and wait as long upon your enemies, as CHRIST waited upon you,—as JESUS stood at your soul's door, with dewy and rainy locks, during the long cold night. I persuade myself, that holy unction, which teacheth you all things, is also saying, “ Overcome evil with good.” It is my prayer for you, that your carriage may grace and adorn the Gospel of that LORD who hath graced you. I hear your husband was also sick ; but I beseech you, in the bowels of JESUS, welcome every rod of GOD ; for I find not, in the whole book of GOD, a greater note of the child of GOD, than to fall down and kiss the feet of an angry GOD, and when he seems to put you away from him, to look up in faith, and say, “ I shall not, I will not be put away from thee ; LORD, give me leave to hold and cleave unto thyself.”

Anwoth,
July 21, 1630.

Your brother in CHRIST,

S. R.



TO MARION MACKNAUGHT.

WELL-BELOVED SISTER,

I HAVE been thinking, since my departure from you, of the pride and malice of your adversaries ; and ye may not (since ye have heard the book of the Psalms so often) take it hardly. I beseech you, in the bowels of CHRIST, set before your eyes the patience of your Fore-runner JESUS, who, “ when he was reviled, reviled not again ; when he suffered, he threatened not ; but committed himself to Him who judgeth righteously.” (1 *Pet.* ii. 23.) And since our LORD and REDEEMER with patience received many a black stroke on his glorious body, and many a buffet of the unbelieving world, and says of himself, (*Isa.* l. 6,) “ I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair ; I hid not my face from shame and spitting ;” follow him, and think it not hard that you receive a blow with your LORD ; take part with

JESUS of his sufferings, and glory in the marks of CHRIST. If this storm were over, you must prepare yourself for a new wound ; for, five thousand years ago, our LORD proclaimed deadly war betwixt the seed of the woman, and the seed of the serpent ; and marvel not that one town cannot keep the children of GOD and the children of the Devil ; be you upon CHRIST's side, and care not what flesh can do ; hold yourself fast by your SAVIOUR, howsoever you be buffeted, and by those that follow Him. Yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be. See 2 Cor. iv. 8, 9 : " We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed ; we are perplexed, but not in despair ; persecuted, but not forsaken ; cast down, but not destroyed." If you can possess your soul in patience, their day is coming. Worthy and dear Sister, know how to carry yourself in trouble ; and when you are hated and reproached, the LORD shows it to you : (*Psal.* xliv. 17 : and cxix. 92 :) " All this is come upon us, yet we have not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsely in thy covenant." " Unless thy law had been my delight, I had perished in mine afflictions." Keep GOD's covenant in your trials ; hold you by his blessed word, and sin not ; flee anger, wrath, grudging, envying, fretting ; and forgive a hundred pence to your fellow-servant, because the LORD hath forgiven you ten thousand talents. For I assure you by the LORD, your adversaries shall get no advantage against you, except you sin, and offend your LORD in your sufferings : but the way to overcome is by patience, forgiving, and praying for your enemies ; in doing whereof you heap coals upon their heads, and your LORD shall open a door to you in your trouble. Wait upon him, as the night-watch waiteth for the morning ; he will not tarry : go up to your watch-tower, and come not down, but by prayer, and faith, and hope, wait on. When the sea is full, it will ebb again ; and so soon as the wicked are come to the top, and are waxed high and mighty, then is their change approaching. They that believe make not haste. I trust in our LORD, you shall by faith sustain yourself, and comfort yourself in your

LORD, and be strong in his power; for you are in the beaten and common way to heaven, when you are under our **LORD**'s crosses. You have reason to rejoice, more than in a crown of gold, to bear the reproach of **CHRIST**. I rest, recommending you and yours, for ever, to the grace and mercy of **GOD**.

Anwoth,
Feb. 11, 1631.

Yours in **CHRIST**,

S. R.



TO JOHN KENNEDY.

My loving and most affectionate Brother in **CHRIST**,

I **SALUTE** you with grace, mercy, and peace, from **GOD** our **FATHER**, and from our **LORD JESUS CHRIST**. I heard with grief of your great danger of perishing by the sea, but of your merciful deliverance with joy. Sure I am, Brother, **SATAN** will leave no stone unrolled, to roll you off your rock, or, at least, to unsettle you: for at the same time, the mouths of wicked men were open against you by land, and the Prince of the power of the air was angry with you by sea. See then how much you are obliged to that murderer, who would beat you with two rods at one time; but, blessed be **GOD**, his arm is short; if the sea and winds would have obeyed him, you had never come to land. Thank your **GOD**, who saith, (*Rev.* i. 18; *Deut.* xxxii. 39; *1 Sam.* ii. 6.) “I have the keys of hell and of death:” “I kill and make alive:” “The **LORD** bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.” If **SATAN** were gaoler, and had the keys of death and of the grave, they would be stored with more prisoners. You were knocking at these black gates, and you found the doors shut; and we do all welcome you back again. I trust you know it is not for nothing that you are sent to us again: the **LORD** knew that you had forgotten something which was necessary for your journey; that your armour was not yet thick enough against the stroke of death. Now, in the strength of

JESUS, despatch your business ; that debt is not forgiven, but delayed ; death hath not bidden you farewell, but hath only left you for a short season. End your journey before the night come upon you ; have all in readiness against the time when you must sail through that black and impetuous Jordan ; and may JESUS, who knoweth both these depths, and the rock, and all the coasts, be your pilot ! The last tide will not wait for you one moment : if you have forgotten any thing when your sea is full, and your foot in that ship, there is no returning again to fetch it. What you do amiss in your life to-day, you may amend to-morrow. For as many suns as GOD maketh to arise upon you, you have as many new lives : but you can die but once ; and, if you mar that business, you cannot come back to mend that piece of work again. No man sinneth twice in dying ill ; as we die but once, so we die ill or well but once. You see how the number of your months is written in GOD'S book ; and, as one of the LORD'S hirelings, you must work till the evening come upon you, and you run out your glass even to the last sand. Fulfil your course with joy ; for we take nothing to the grave with us, but a good or evil conscience. And although the sky clear after this storm, yet clouds will engender another. You contracted with CHRIST, I hope, when you first began to follow him, that you would bear his cross ; fulfil your part of the contract with patience. Be honest, Brother, in bargaining with him ; for who knoweth how to bring up children better than our GOD ? For, to lay aside his knowledge, which there is no searching out, he hath been practised in bringing up his heirs these five thousand years ; and many of them are now at home in their own house, in their father's inheritance. Now, the form of his bringing up was by chastisements, scourging, and correcting ;—his eldest son and his heir, JESUS, is not excepted. Suffer we must : before we were born, GOD decreed it ; and it is easier to complain of his decree, than to change it. Tribulation and temptations will almost loose us at the root ; and yet without tribulations and temptations we can no more

grow, than herbs or corn without rain. Forward then, dear Brother; hold fast the truth; for the world, sell not one dram of God's truth, especially now when most men measure truth by time, like young seamen setting their compass by a cloud. The God of truth establish us; for, alas! now there are none to comfort the prisoners of hope, and the mourners in Zion. We can do little, except pray and mourn for JOSEPH. And let their tongue cleave to the roof of their mouth, who forget Jerusalem now in her day. MARION MACNAUGHT doth remember most heartily her love to you. Blessed be the LORD, that I found in this country such a woman, to whom JESUS is dearer than her own heart. Good Brother, call to mind the memory of your worthy father, now asleep in CHRIST; and, as his custom was, pray continually, and wrestle for the life of a dying church. Now I commend you, your whole soul, and body, and spirit, to JESUS CHRIST and his keeping; hoping that you will die and live, stand and fall, with the cause of our Master, JESUS. The LORD JESUS himself be with your spirit! Your loving Brother,

Anwoth,
Feb. 2, 1632.

In our LORD JESUS,

S. R.



TO MARION MACNAUGHT.

Well-beloved and dear Sister in CHRIST,

I COULD not get an answer written to your letter till now, in respect of my wife's disease; and she is yet mightily pained;—I hope all shall end in God's mercy. I know that an afflicted life looks very like the way that leads to the kingdom; for the Apostle (*Acts* xiv. 22) hath drawn the King's market-way "through much tribulation" to "the Kingdom." The LORD grant us the whole armour of God! If the work be of GOD, he can make a stepping-stone of the Devil himself, for setting forward the work. For yourself, I would advise you to ask of God a sub-

missive heart. Your reward shall be with the LORD. Although the people be not gathered, as the Prophet speaks, and suppose the word do not prosper, God shall account you a repairer of the breaches; hold your gripe fast. If you knew the mind of the glorified in heaven, they think heaven comes to their hand at an easy market, when they have got it for threescore or fourscore years' wrestling with God. When you are come thither, you shall think, "All I did, in respect of my rich reward enjoyed of free grace, was too little." Now then, for the love of the Prince of your salvation, who is standing at the end of your way, holding in his hand the prize and garland to the race-runners, forward, forward; faint not! Take as many to heaven with you as you are able to draw; the more you draw with you, the more welcome you shall be yourself. Be no niggard of the grace of God; and employ all your endeavours for establishing an honest ministry in your town, now when you have so few to speak a good word for you. I have many a grieved heart daily in my calling. I should be undone, if I had not access to the King's chamber of presence, to show him all the business. The Devil rages and is mad, to see the water drawn from his own mill; but would to God that we could be the LORD's instruments, to build the SON of GOD's house. Pray for me. If the LORD furnish not new timber from Lebanon, to build the house, the work will cease. I look to him, who hath begun well with me; I have it in his hand-writing that he will not change. The LORD establish you in peace! The LORD be with your spirit!

Anwoth, 1633.

Yours in CHRIST,

S. R.



TO MARION MACNAUGHT.

WELL-BELOVED SISTER,

MY old and dearest love in CHRIST remembered:—Our LORD knows best what is good for an old Kirk, that is

fallen from her first love, and hath forgotten her husband, days without number. There is a dry wind coming, but neither to fan nor to purge. Happy are they who are not blown away with the chaff; for we shall but suffer temptation for ten days. But those who are "faithful to death shall receive the crown of life." I hear daily what hath been spoken of myself, most unjustly and falsely; and no marvel; the Dragon with the swing of his tail hath made the "third part of the stars to fall from heaven," and the fallen would have many to fall with them. If ever Satan was busy, now, when he knoweth his time is short, he is busy: "Yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." I know, before it be long the LORD shall come, and rid all pleas betwixt us and his enemies. Now welcome LORD JESUS, go fast!

You remember what I said to you concerning your love to me and my brother begun in CHRIST; you know, "we are here but strangers," and you have not yet found us a dry well, as others have been. Be not overcome of any suspicion. I trust in GOD that the LORD, who knit us together, shall keep us together. It is time now, that the lambs of JESUS should all run together, when the wolf is barking at them; yet I know that, before GOD's children want a cross, their love amongst themselves shall be a cross; but our LORD giveth love for another end. I know you will with love cover infirmities; and our LORD give you wisdom in all things! I think love hath broad shoulders, and will bear many things, and yet neither faint, nor sweat, nor fall under the burden. Grace, mercy, and peace, be with you!

Anwoth,
April 25, 1631.

Yours in his LORD JESUS,

S. R.



TO MY LADY KENMURE.

MADAM,

THE cause of my not writing to your Ladyship is not my forgetfulness of you, but the want of a convenient

bearer. I bless our LORD through CHRIST, who hath brought you home again to your country, from that place where you have seen with your eyes that which our LORD taught you before, to wit, that worldly glory is nothing but a vapour, a shadow, the form of the water, or something less and lighter, even nothing; and that our LORD hath not without cause said in his word, (1 *Cor.* vii. 31,) "The countenance," or "fashion, of this world passeth away." In that place, our LORD compareth it to an image in a looking-glass, for it is the looking-glass of ADAM'S sons: some come to the glass, and see in it the picture of honour, and but a picture indeed; for true honour is to be great in the sight of GOD. And others see in it the shadow of riches, and but a shadow indeed; for durable riches stand as one of the maids of wisdom upon her left-hand. (*Prov.* iii. 16.) And a third sort see in it the face of painted pleasures, and the beholders will not believe but that the image they see in this glass is a living man, till the LORD come and break the glass in pieces, and remove the face; and then, like PHARAOH awakened, they say, "Behold, it was a dream." I know your Ladyship thinketh yourself little, for the favourable aspect of any of these three painted faces; and blessed be our LORD that it is so; the better for you: Madam, they are not worthy to be wooers to your soul, which looks to a higher match than painted clay. Know therefore, that the place whither our LORD JESUS cometh to woo a bride, it is even in the furnace: for if you be one of ZION'S daughters, the LORD who hath his fire in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem; (*Isa.* xxxi. 9,) is purifying you in the furnace. I believe you esteem yourself to be of those whom GOD hath tried these many years, and refined as silver. But, Madam, I will show your Ladyship a privilege that others want, and you have in this case. Such as are in prosperity, and increased with children and friends, may indeed justly consider that the word of GOD is written to them for their instruction; yet to you who are in trouble, from whom the LORD hath taken many children, and whom

he hath exercised otherwise, there are some particular promises in the word of **GOD**, made in a most special manner, which would never have been yours, so as they now are, if you had your portion in this life, as others : and therefore all the comforts, promises, and mercies, which **GOD** offereth to the afflicted, are so many kind letters written to you ; take them to you, Madam, and claim your right, and be not robbed. It is no small comfort, that **GOD** hath written some Scriptures to you, which he hath not written to others. You seem rather in this to be envied than pitied ; and you are indeed in this like people of another world, and those that are above the ordinary rank of mankind, whom our **KING** and **LORD**, in his letter to his well-beloved spouse, hath named above all the rest, and to whom he hath written comforts, and his hearty commendations, in the 56th of *Isaiah*, ver. 4, 5, and in *Psalms* cxlvii. 2, 3. Read these and the like ; and think that your **GOD** is like a friend who sendeth a letter to a whole house and family, but speaketh in his letter by name, to some that are dearest to him in the house. Ye are, then, of the dearest friends of the Bridegroom ; if it were lawful, I would envy you, that **GOD** hath honoured you so above many of his children. Therefore, your part is, in this case, (seeing **GOD** taketh nothing from you, but that which he is to supply with his own presence,) to desire your **LORD** to know his own room, and to come in, in the room of dead children. “**JEHOVAH**, know thy own place, and take it to thee,” is all you have to say. I persuade myself, that this world is to you an uncouth inn ; and that you are like a traveller, who hath his staff in his hand, and his feet upon the door-threshold. Go forward, in the strength of your **LORD**, with your face towards him, who longeth more for a sight of you, than you can do for him. The hand of the **LORD** be with you in your journey. What have you to do here ? This is not your mountain of rest ; arise then, and set your foot up the mountain ; go up out of the wilderness, leaning upon your Beloved. If you knew the welcome that abideth you when you come home, you would hasten your pace ;

for you shall see your LORD put up his own hand, and wipe all tears from your eyes.

I leave your Ladyship, praying more earnestly for grace and mercy to be multiplied upon you, here and hereafter, than my pen can express. The LORD JESUS be with your spirit!

Your Ladyship's at all obedience, in the LORD,
Kirkcudbright. S. R.



TO MY LADY KENMURE.

MADAM,

ALL dutiful obedience to our LORD JESUS remembered:— I trust I need not much entreat your Ladyship to look to him who hath stricken you. Faith will teach you to kiss a striking LORD, and so acknowledge the sovereignty of God (in the death of a child) to be above the power of mortal men, who may pluck up a flower in the bud, and not be blamed for it: and if our dear LORD pluck up one of his roses, who can challenge him? He sendeth us to his world, as men to a market; wherein some stay many hours, and eat and drink, and buy and sell, and pass through the fair, till they be weary; and such are those who live long: and others come slipping into the morning-market, and neither sit nor stand, but look about them a little, and pass presently home again; and these are infants, who end their short market in the morning. Our LORD, who hath numbered man's months, and set him bounds that he cannot pass, (*Job* xiv. 5,) hath written the length of our market; and it is easier to complain of the decree, than to change it. I verily believe, when I write this, your LORD hath taught your Ladyship to lay your hand on your mouth: But I shall be far from desiring your Ladyship, or any others, to cast up a cross, like an old useless bill, that is only for the fire; but rather would wish that each cross were looked in the face seven times, and were

read over and over again. It is the messenger of the LORD, and speaks something; and the man of understanding will hear the rod, and him that appointed it. Try what is the taste of the LORD's cup, and drink with God's blessing, that you may grow thereby. I trust in God, whatever speech it utter to your soul, this is one word in it, (*Job* v. 17,) "Blessed is the man whom God correcteth;" and that it saith to you, "You are from home while here; you are not of this world, as CHRIST was not of this world." There is something keeping for you, which is worth the having. All that is here is condemned to die, to pass away like a snow-ball before a summer's sun; and, since death took first possession of something of yours, it hath been, and daily is, creeping nearer and nearer to yourself, although with no noise of feet. Your husbandman and LORD hath lopped off some branches already; the tree itself is to be transplanted to the high garden; in a good time be it, and our LORD ripen your Ladyship! All these crosses (and indeed, when I remember them, they are heavy and many: peace, peace be the end of them!) are to make you white, and ripe for the LORD's harvest. I have seen the LORD weaning you from the breasts of this world. It was never his mind that it should be your patrimony, and God be thanked for that; you look the liker one of the heirs. Let the moveables go, why not? They are not yours: fasten upon the heritage; and our LORD JESUS make the charter sure, and give your Ladyship to grow as a palm-tree on God's Mount Zion. This is all I can do, to recommend your case to your LORD, who hath you written upon the palms of his hands. Now may he who hath called you confirm and establish your heart in grace, unto the day of the liberty of the sons of God!

Ardwell, Your Ladyship's, at all submissive obedience,
April 29, 1634. S. R.

TO MARION MACKNAUGHT.

MY dearest love in CHRIST remembered:—I entreat you, charge your soul to return to rest, and to glorify your dearest LORD in believing; and know that, for the good will of him that dwelleth in the bush, the burning Kirk shall not be consumed to ashes; but (*Deut. xxxiii. 16*) “Blessing shall come on the head of JOSEPH, and upon the top of the head of him that was separated from his brethren.” And are not the saints separated from their brethren, and sold, and hated? For (*Gen. xlix. 23, 24,*) “the archers have sorely grieved JOSEPH, and shot at him, and hated him: but his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty GOD of JACOB: from thence is the Shepherd, the stone of ISRAEL.”—The stone of ISRAEL shall not be broken in pieces. Though it is hammered upon by the children of this world, we shall live and not die. Our LORD hath done all this, to see if we will believe, and not give over; and I am persuaded, that you will stick by your work. The eye of CHRIST hath been upon all this business; and he taketh good heed too, who is for him, and who is against him. Let us do our part, as we would be approved of CHRIST. The SON of GOD is near to his enemies; if they were not deaf, they might hear the noise of his feet: and he will come with a start upon his weeping children, and take them on his knee, and lay their head in his bosom, and dry their watery eyes. And this day is fast coming; “Yet a little time, and the vision will speak, it will not tarry.” These questions betwixt us and our adversaries will all be decided in yonder day, when the SON of GOD shall come, and rid all pleas; and it will be seen whether we or they have been for CHRIST, and who have been pleading for BAAL. It is not known what we are now; but when our life shall appear in glory, then we shall see who laughs fastest in that

day. Therefore we must "possess our souls in patience," and "go into our chamber," and rest "until the indignation be past." We shall not weep long, when our LORD shall take us up in the day that he gathereth his jewels. My dear friend, lay down your head upon CHRIST's breast. Weep not; the Lion of the tribe of Judah will arise. "The sun is gone down upon the Prophets, and our gold is become dim; and the LORD feedeth his people with waters of gall and wormwood:" yet CHRIST standeth but behind the wall; his bowels are moved for Scotland; he waiteth (as ISAIAH saith) "that he may show mercy." If we would go home, and take our brethren with us, "weeping with our faces towards Zion, asking the way thitherward," he would bring back our captivity. We may not think that GOD has no care of his own honour, while men tread it under their feet; he will "clothe himself with vengeance as with a cloak," and appear against our enemies for our deliverance. Ye were never yet beguiled, and God will not begin with you. Wrestle still with the Angel of the Covenant, and you shall get the blessing: Fight; he delighteth to be overcome by wrestling. Grace, grace, and mercy, be with you!

Anwoth,
Sept. 25, 1634.

Yours in CHRIST,

S. R.



TO THE VISCOUNTESS OF KENMURE.

MADAM,

THAT honour which I have prayed for these sixteen years, with submission to my LORD's will, my Lord hath now bestowed upon me; even to suffer for my King JESUS, and for his kingly crown, and for the freedom of his kingdom, which his Father hath given him. The Lords have sentenced me to deprivation, and confinement within the town of Aberdeen. I am charged, in the King's name, to enter against the 20th day of August next, and there to remain

during the King's pleasure. Although CHRIST's green cross, newly laid upon me, be somewhat heavy, while I call to mind many fair days, sweet and comfortable to my soul, and to the souls of many others, and how young ones in CHRIST are plucked from the breast, and the inheritance of GOD laid waste; yet that perfumed cross of CHRIST is accompanied with sweet refreshments, with the favours of a King, with the joy of the HOLY GHOST, with faith that the LORD hears the sighing of a prisoner, and with undoubted hope (as sure as my LORD liveth) after this night to see day-light, and that CHRIST's sky will clear up again upon me and his poor Kirk, and that in a strange land, amongst strange faces, he will give favour in the eyes of men to his poor oppressed servant, who dares not but love that lovely one, that princely one, JESUS, the comforter of his soul. All would be well, if I were free of old challenges for neglect in my calling, and for speaking too little for my Well-beloved's crown, honour, and kingdom. O for a day in the assembly of the saints, to be an advocate for King JESUS! If my LORD go on now to quarrels also, I die, I cannot endure it: but I look for peace from him; because he knoweth that I dare bear men's feud, but dare not bear his feud. This is my only exercise, that I fear I have done little good in my ministry; but I dare not but say, I loved the children of the wedding-chamber, and prayed for, and desired the thriving of the marriage, and coming of his kingdom. I apprehend no less than a judgment upon Galloway; and the LORD shall visit this whole nation. But what can be laid upon me, or any the like of me, is too light for CHRIST: CHRIST would bear death and burning alive, in his weak servants, for his honourable cause for which I now suffer. Yet, notwithstanding all my complaints, (and he knoweth that I dare not now dissemble,) he was never sweeter and kinder than he is now; one token of his love now is sweeter than ten long since: sweet, sweet is his cross; light, light and easy is his yoke. O what a sweet step were it up to my Father's house, through ten deaths, for the truth and cause of that unknown Plant

of Renown, the man called the BRANCH, the chief among ten thousand, the fairest among the sons of men.

O what unseen joys, how many hidden ardours of love, are in the remnants of the sufferings of CHRIST! My dear and worthy Lady, I give it to your Ladyship under my hand, (my heart writing as well as my hand,) Welcome, welcome, sweet and glorious cross of CHRIST; welcome, JESUS with thy light cross; thou hast now gained and gotten all my love from me; keep what thou hast gotten. Only, woe is for my bereft flock, for the lambs of JESUS, who, I fear, will be fed with dry breasts; but I spare now. Madam, I dare not promise to see your Ladyship, because of the little time I have allotted me, and I purpose to obey the King, who hath power of my body; and rebellion to Kings is unbecoming CHRIST's Ministers.

Pray write thanks to your brother, my Lord of Lorne, for what he hath done for me, a poor unknown stranger to his Lordship. I shall pray for him and his house while I live; it is his honour to open his mouth in the streets for his wronged and oppressed master, CHRIST JESUS. Now, Madam, commending your Ladyship, and the sweet child, to the tender mercies of mine own LORD JESUS, and to the good will of him who dwelt in the bush, I rest

Edinburgh,
July 28, 1636.

Yours in JESUS,

S. R.



TO MR. ROBERT CUNINGHAME,

Minister of the Gospel.

Well-beloved and Reverend Brother,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you! I thought good to take the opportunity of writing to you; seeing it hath seemed good to the Lord of the Harvest to lay upon us a more honourable service, even to suffer for his name. I have had a desire to see you in the face; yet now, being

the prisoner of CHRIST, it is taken away. I am greatly comforted to hear of your soldier's stately spirit for your princely and royal Captain, JESUS, our LORD, and of the grace of GOD in the rest of our dear brethren with you. You have heard of my trouble, I suppose. It hath pleased our LORD JESUS to let loose these Lords in his house, to deprive me of my ministry at Anwoth, and to confine me eight-score miles from thence to Aberdeen; and also (which was not done to any before) to inhibit me to speak at all in JESUS's name within this kingdom, under the pain of rebellion. But let our crowned King in ZION reign; by his grace the loss is theirs, the advantage is CHRIST's and truth's. Although this honest cross gained some ground on me by my heaviness, and inward challenges of conscience for a time were sharp; yet now, for the encouragement of you all, I dare say it, "Welcome, welcome, sweet cross of CHRIST." I verily think that the chains of my LORD JESUS are all overlaid with pure gold, and that his cross is perfumed, and that it smelleth of CHRIST; that the victory shall be by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of his truth; and that CHRIST, though now lying on his back, in his weak servants, and oppressed truth, shall yet ride over his enemies, and shall strike through Kings in the day of his wrath.

Blessed are they who are content to take strokes with a weeping CHRIST. Faith will trust the LORD, and is not hasty nor headstrong; neither is faith so timorous, as to flatter a temptation, or to bribe the cross. My heart is woe indeed for my Mother-Church, that hath played the harlot with many lovers; for her husband hath a mind to sell her for horrible transgressions, and heavy will the hand of the LORD be upon this backsliding nation. Yet I trust that Scotland's skies shall clear again; that CHRIST shall build again the old waste places of JACOB; that our dead and dry bones shall become an army of living men; and that our Well-beloved may feed among the lilies, until the day break, and the shadows flee away. Only let us be faithful to him, to him that can ride through hell and death, and

his horse never stumble ; and let him make of me a bridge over a water, so that his high and holy name may be glorified in me. Strokes from the Mediator's hand are very sweet ; he has always been dear to my soul ; but since I suffered for him, he has been more precious to me than before. O that every hair of my head, and every member and every bone in my body, were a man to witness a fair confession for him ! I would think all too little for him. Oft borne down, and hungry in waiting for the marriage-supper of the Lamb ; nevertheless I think it the LORD's wise love that feeds us with hunger, and makes us fat with such wants and desertions. I know not, my dear brother, if our worthy brethren be gone to sea or not ; if they be yet with you, acquaint them with my troubles, and entreat them to pray for the poor afflicted prisoner of CHRIST : they are dear to my soul ; I seek your prayers and theirs for my flock ; their remembrance breaks my heart. I desire to love that people, and others my dear acquaintance in CHRIST, with love in GOD, and as GOD loveth them. I know that he who sent me to the West and South, sends me also to the North : I will charge my soul to believe and to wait for him, and will follow his providence, and not go before it, nor stay behind it. Now, my dear brother, taking farewell, I commend you all to the word of his grace, and to the work of his SPIRIT,—to him who holdeth the seven stars in his right hand,—that you may be kept spotless till the day of JESUS our LORD.

Your Brother in affliction, in our LORD JESUS,

From Irving, being on my journey to CHRIST'S
Palace in Aberdeen, August 4, 1636.

S. R.



TO THE VISCOUNTESS OF KENMURE.

My very honourable and dear Lady,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you ! O how sweet are sufferings for CHRIST ! GOD forgive them that raise an

ill report upon the cross of CHRIST; it is our weak and dim eyes which look but at the one side of it, that make us mistake. Those who can take that crabbed tree handsomely upon their back, shall find it such a burden as wings unto a bird, or sails to a ship. It were a sweet and honourable death to die for JESUS! This love is a mystery to the world. I would not have believed that there was so much in CHRIST as there is. "Come and see," maketh CHRIST to be known in his excellency and glory. I wish all this nation knew how sweet his presence is. It is little to see CHRIST in a book, as men do the world in a card: they talk of CHRIST by the book and the tongue, and no more; but to come near to CHRIST, and embrace him, is another thing. I write to your honour, for your encouragement in that honourable profession with which CHRIST hath honoured you. This world can take nothing from you that is truly yours, and death can do you no wrong. When your Head shall appear, your Bridegroom and LORD, your day shall then dawn, and it shall never have an afternoon, nor an evening shadow. Let your child be CHRIST's; let him stay beside you, as the LORD's pledge, that you shall willingly render again, if GOD will. My silence on the LORD's day keeps me from being exalted above measure, and from startling in the ardours of my LORD's love. I have wrestled long with this sad silence, and my soul hath been pleading with CHRIST; but I will yield to him. I am a fool, and he is GOD: I will hold my peace hereafter. Let me hear from your Ladyship, and your dear child; and pray for a prisoner of CHRIST, who is mindful of your Ladyship. Grace, grace be with you! I write and pray blessings to your sweet child.

Yours in all dutiful obedience, in his only LORD JESUS,

Aberdeen,
Nov. 22, 1636.

S. R.

TO ROBERT GORDON, OF KNOCKBREX.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be multiplied upon you. O what owe I to the file, to the hammer, to the furnace of my LORD JESUS; who hath now let me see how good the wheat of CHRIST is, that goeth through his mill and his oven, to be made bread for his own table. *Grace tried* is better than grace, and it is more than grace; it is glory in its infancy. I now see, that godliness is more than outside. Who knoweth the truth of grace without a trial? O how little getteth CHRIST of us, but that which he winneth with much toil and pain; and how soon would faith freeze without a cross! How many dumb crosses have been laid upon my back, that had never a tongue to speak the sweetness of CHRIST, as this hath! When CHRIST blesseth his own crosses with a tongue, they breathe out CHRIST's love, wisdom, kindness, and care of us. Why should I start at the plough of my LORD, that maketh deep furrows on my soul? I know he is no idle husbandman; he purposed a crop. O that this white, withered ley-ground were made fertile to bear a crop for him by whom it is painfully dressed; and that this fallow-ground was broken up! Why was I grieved, that he put his garland upon my head, the glory and honour of his faithful witnesses? Verily, he hath not put me to a loss by what I suffer; he oweth me nothing; for, in my bonds, how sweet and comfortable have the thoughts of him been to me, wherein I find a sufficient recompense of reward! How blind are my adversaries, who sent me to a banquetting-house, and not to a prison or place of exile! Why should I smother my husband's honesty, or be a niggard in giving out to others what I get for nothing! Brother, eat with me, and give thanks: I charge you before GOD, that ye speak to others, and invite them to help me to praise. O my debt of praise, how weighty it is, and how far run up! O that others would lend me to pay, and

teach me to praise! **LORD JESUS**, take my thoughts for payment! Yet I am with the tear in my eye; for, by reason of my silence, sorrow hath filled me. My harp is hanged upon the willow-trees, because I am in a strange land. I am still kept in exercise with envious brethren: my mother hath borne me a man of contention. Grace, grace, be with you: and **GOD**, who heareth prayer, visit you; and let it be unto you according to the prayers of .

Your own brother, and **CHRIST**'s prisoner,

Aberdeen,
Jan. 1, 1637.

S. R.



TO JOHN KENNEDY, BAILLIE OF AYR.

Worthy and dear Brother,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you! I am every way in good case, both in soul and body;—all honour and glory be to my **LORD**! I want nothing but a further revelation of the beauty of the unknown **SON OF GOD**. Either I know not what Christianity is, or we have stinted a measure of holiness; and there we are at a stay, drawing our breath all our life. A moderation in **GOD**'s way, now, is much in request. I profess, I have never taken pains to find out him whom my soul loveth; there is a gate yet of finding out **CHRIST**, that I have never lighted upon. O that I could find it out! Alas, how soon are we pleased with our own shadow in a glass! It were good to begin in sad earnest to find out **GOD**, and to seek the right tread of **CHRIST**. Time, custom, a good opinion of ourselves, our good meaning, our lazy desires, our fair shows, and the world's glistening lustres, are that wherewith most satisfy themselves: but a bed watered with tears, a throat dry with praying, eyes as a fountain of tears for the sins of the land, are rarely to be found among us. O that we could know the power of godliness! This is one part of my case; and another is, that I, like a fool, once summoned

CHRIST for unkindness, and complained of his fickleness and unconstancy, because he would have no more of my service nor preaching, and had cast me out of the inheritance of the LORD: and I confess now I was a fool; yet he hath borne with me. I gave him a fair advantage against me, but love and mercy would not let him take it; and the truth is, now he hath chided himself friends with me, and hath taken away the mask, and hath renewed his wonted favour in such a manner, that he hath paid me my "hundred fold in this life." I write this to you, that I may entreat, nay, adjure and charge you, by the love of your Well-beloved, to help me to praise, and to tell all your christian acquaintance to help me, for I am deeply drowned in his debt: and yet I have something to keep me from being exalted above measure; his word is a fire shut up in my bowels, and I am weary with forbearing. Grace be with you! Pray for the prisoner.

Aberdeen,
Jan. 1, 1637.

Yours in his only LORD JESUS,

S. R.



TO MR. ROBERT BLAIR.

Reverend and dearly beloved Brother,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, from GOD our FATHER, and from our LORD JESUS CHRIST, be to you! It is no great wonder, my dear Brother, that ye be in heaviness for a season, and that GOD's will, in crossing your design and desires to dwell amongst a people whose GOD is the LORD, should move you. I deny not but ye have cause to inquire, what his Providence speaketh in this to you; but GOD's directing and commanding will can by no good logic be concluded from events of Providence. The LORD sent PAUL on many errands, for the spreading of his Gospel, where he found lions in his way. A promise was made to his people of the Holy Land; and yet many nations in the

way fought against them who had the promise, to keep them from possessing that good land which the LORD their GOD had given them. I persuade myself ye have learned, in every condition, wherein ye are, therein to be content, and to say, "Good is the will of the LORD; let it be done." The LORD purposeth to bring mercy out of your sufferings and silence, which as I know by experience, are grievous to you. Seeing he knoweth our willing mind to serve him, our wages are running on with our GOD; even as some sick soldiers get their pay, when they are bed-fast, and not able to go to the field with others. And when they have swallowed us up, they shall be sick, and vomit us out living men again: the Devil's stomach cannot digest the Church of GOD. Suffering is one half of our ministry, although the hardest: for we would be content if our King JESUS would make an open proclamation, and cry down crosses, and cry up joy, gladness, ease, honour, and peace; but it must not be so: "Through much tribulation, we must enter into the kingdom of GOD;" not only by it, but through it must we go. It is folly to think to steal to heaven with a whole skin. My dear Brother, help me to show the LORD's people with you, what he hath done to my soul, that they may pray and praise. I charge you, in the name of CHRIST, not to omit it; for, for this cause I write to you, that my sufferings may glorify my King, and edify his church in Ireland. I hope the LORD will move your heart to proclaim, in my behalf, the excellency and glory of my King. It is but our soft flesh that hath raised a slander on the cross of CHRIST; I see now the white side of it; my LORD's chains are all over gilded. O that Scotland and Ireland had part of my feast! And yet I get not my meat but with many strokes. There are none here to whom I can speak; I dwell in Kedar's tents. Refresh me with a letter from you. Courage, courage, joy, joy for evermore! O joy unspeakable and glorious! O for help to set my crowned King on high! O for love to Him, who is altogether lovely! That love which many waters cannot quench, neither can the floods drown! I remember you,

and bear your name on my breast to CHRIST: I beseech you, forget not his prisoner. Grace, mercy, and peace, be with you! Your brother and fellow-prisoner,

Aberdeen,
Feb. 7, 1637.

S. R.



TO THE VISCOUNTESS OF KENMURE.

MADAM,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you! I received your Ladyship's letter; it refreshed me in my heaviness: the blessing and prayers of a prisoner of CHRIST come upon you! Since my coming hither, GALLOWAY sent me not a line: but I want not kindness of one, who hath the gate of it;—CHRIST (if he had never done more for me since I was born) hath engaged my heart, and gained my blessing, in this house of my pilgrimage. It pleaseth my Well-beloved to dine with a poor prisoner, and the King's spikenard casteth a fragrant smell. Nothing grieveth me, but that I eat my feasts alone, and that I cannot edify his saints. My silence eats me up; but he hath told me, that he thanketh me no less than if I were preaching daily. He sees how gladly I would be at it; and therefore my wages are going on in heaven, as if I were still preaching CHRIST. Captains pay daily bed-fast soldiers, although they do not march, nor carry armour. "Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of my LORD, and my LORD shall be my strength." (*Isa.* xlix. 5.) My garland, "The banished Minister," (the term for me at Aberdeen,) shameth me not. I have seen the white side of CHRIST's cross. How lovely hath he been to his oppressed servant! "The LORD executeth judgment for the oppressed, he giveth food to the hungry: the LORD looseth the prisoner; the LORD raiseth them that are bowed down: the LORD preserveth the stranger." (*Ps.* cxlvi. 7—9.) If it were come to exchanging of crosses, I would not exchange my cross with any. I am well pleased with CHRIST, and he

with me. It is true, for all this, I get my meat with many strokes, and am cast down for the case of my distressed brother; yet I hope the LORD will be surety for his servant. But now, upon some weak experience, I am come to love a rumbling and raging Devil best; seeing we must have a Devil to hold the saints waking, I wish a cumbersome Devil, rather than a secure and sleeping one. At my first coming hither, I said he had cast me over the wall of the vineyard, like a dry tree; but it was his mercy, I see, that the fire did not burn the dry tree. And now, as if my LORD JESUS had done that fault, and not I, (who belied my LORD,) he hath made amends, and he spake not one word against me; but he hath come again, and quickened my soul with his presence. Nay, now I think the cross of CHRIST JESUS my LORD, and these comforts that accompany it, better than the world's rent. Your Ladyship wrote to me, that you are yet an ill scholar. Madam, ye must go in at heaven's gates with your book in your hand, still learning. You have had your own large share of troubles, and a double portion; but it saith that your Father counteth you not a bastard. I long to hear of the child. I write the blessings of CHRIST's prisoner and the mercies of GOD to him: let him be CHRIST's and yours betwixt you; but let CHRIST be the lender, and ye the borrower, not an owner. Madam, it is not long since I did write to your Ladyship, that CHRIST is keeping mercy for you; and I still abide by it. Love him dearly; there is in him that which you never saw; he is ever nigh; he is a tree of life, green and blossoming, both summer and winter. I invite you anew to come to him. "Come and see," will speak better things of him, than I can do: "Come nearer," will say much. GOD never thought this world a portion worthy of you; he will not give you ESAU's portion, but reserves the inheritance of JACOB for you. Are ye not well married now? Have you not a good husband now? My heart cannot express what sad nights I have for "the Virgin-Daughter of my people." Woe is me! for our time is coming. Now the blessing of our dearest LORD JESUS,

and the blessing of him that is separate from his brethren, come upon you !

Yours, at Aberdeen, the prisoner of CHRIST,

Aberdeen.

S. R.



TO THE VISCOUNTESS OF KENMURE.

MADAM,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to your Ladyship ! I would not omit to write a line by this christian bearer, one in your Ladyship's own case, driven near to CHRIST in and by her affliction. I wish that my friends in Galloway forget me not ; but however it be, CHRIST is so good, that I will have no other tutor, suppose I could have ten thousand beside. I now think five hundred heavy hearts for him too little. I wish that CHRIST, now weeping, suffering, and contemned of men, were more dear and desirable to many souls, than he is. I am sure, if the saints wanted CHRIST's cross, so profitable and so sweet, they might, for the gain and glory of it, wish it were lawful either to buy or borrow his cross : but it is a mercy that the saints have it for nothing ; for I know no sweeter way to heaven, than through free grace and hard trials, together ; and one of these cannot well want the other. O that time would post faster, and hasten our long looked-for communion with the fairest among the sons of men ! O that the day would favour us, and come, and put CHRIST and us in each other's arms ! I am sure a few years will do our turn, and the soldier's hour-glass will soon run out. Madam, look to your lamp, and look to your LORD's coming, and let your heart dwell aloof from that sweet child. CHRIST's jealousy will not admit two equal loves in your Ladyship's heart. He must have one, and that the greatest ; a little one to a creature may, and must, suffice a soul married to him : " Your Maker is your husband." (*Isa. liv.*) I would wish you well, and my

obligations these many years speak no less to me; but more I neither wish, nor pray, nor desire for your Ladyship, than CHRIST singled out from all created good things; or CHRIST, although wet in his own blood, and wearing a crown of thorns. I am sure, the saints, at their best, are but strangers to the incomparable sweetness of CHRIST. He is so new, so fresh in excellency, every day, to those that search more and more in him, as if heaven could furnish us as many new CHRISTs (if I may speak so) as there are days betwixt him and us; and yet he is one and the same. O, we love an unknown lover, when we love CHRIST. Grace for evermore, even while glory perfects it, be with your Ladyship!

Yours in JESUS,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.



TO THE LADY CARDONNESS.

My dearly beloved and longed-for in the LORD,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you! I long to hear how your soul prospereth, and how the kingdom of CHRIST thriveth in you. I exhort you and beseech you, in the bowels of CHRIST, faint not, weary not. There is a great necessity of heaven; ye must needs have it: all other things, as houses, lands, children, husband, friends, country, credit, health, wealth, honour, may be wanted; but heaven is your "one thing necessary, that good part which shall not be taken from you." See that ye buy the field where the pearl is; sell all, and make a purchase of salvation. Think it not easy, for it is a steep ascent to eternal glory; many are lying dead in the way, that are slain with security. O what I want! I want so many things, that I am almost asking if I have any thing at all.

Every man thinketh he is rich enough in grace, till he findeth his pack poor and light in the day of a heavy trial. I found that I had not enough to bear my expenses, and should

have fainted, if want had not chased me to the store-house of all. I beseech you, make conscience of your ways; deal kindly with your tenants: to fill a breach, make not a greater breach in the conscience. I wish plenty of love to your soul. Let the world be the portion of bastards; make it not yours; after the last trumpet is blown, the world and all its glory will be like an old house that is burned to ashes, and like an old fallen castle without a roof. Fie, fie upon us, fools, who think ourselves debtors to the world! My LORD hath brought me to this, that I would not give a drink of cold water for this world's kindness. I wonder that men long after, or care for, these feathers: to give out conscience, and to get in clay again, is a strange bargain. I have written my mind at length to your husband; I cannot forget him in my prayers; my counsel is, that ye bear with him, when passion overtaketh him: "A soft answer putteth away wrath." When CHRIST hideth himself, wait on, and importune him till he return; it is not time then to be carelessly patient: I love to be grieved when he hideth his smiles. I counsel you to study sanctification, and to be dead to this world. Counsel your husband to fulfil my joy, and to seek the LORD's face: show him from me, that my joy and desire is to hear that he is in the LORD. God casteth him often in my mind; I cannot forget him: I hope, CHRIST and he have something to do together. Bless JOHN from me; I write blessings to him, and to your husband, and the rest of your children.

Your lawful and loving Pastor

Aberdeen,
Feb. 20, 1637.

In his only LORD JESUS,
S. R.



TO THE LADY CARDONNESS THE ELDER.

Worthy and well-beloved in the LORD,
GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you! I long to hear from you, that I may know how your soul prospereth. My

desire and longing is, to hear that ye walk in the truth, and that ye are content to follow the despised, but lovely, SON of GOD. I cannot but recommend him unto you as your husband, your well-beloved, your portion, your comfort, and your joy. He hath watered with his sweet comforts an oppressed prisoner. He was always kind to my soul, but never so kind as now, in my greatest extremities. I dine and sup with CHRIST: he visiteth my soul with the visitation of his love in the night-watches. I exhort you, in the name of CHRIST, to continue in the truth, which I delivered to you. Make CHRIST sure to your soul; for your day draweth nigh to an end. Many slide back now, who seemed to be CHRIST's friends: but "be ye faithful to the death, and ye shall have the crown of life." This span-length of your days, whereof the SPIRIT of GOD speaketh, will within a short time come to nothing. O how comfortable shall the feast of a good conscience be, when your eye-strings shall break, your face wax pale, and the breath turn cold, and your poor soul come sighing to the windows of the house of clay, and long to be out, and to have the gaoler to open the door, that the prisoner may be set at liberty! Ye draw nigh the water-side; look to your accounts; ask for your guide to take you to the other side. Let not the world be your portion; what have ye to do with dead clay? Ye are not a bastard, but a lawfully-begotten child; therefore set your heart on the inheritance. Go up before-hand and see your lodging; look through all your Father's rooms in heaven, for in your Father's house are many dwelling-places. "Set your heart on things that are above, where CHRIST is at the right-hand of GOD." Stir up your husband to mind his own country; and counsel him to deal mercifully with the poor people of GOD under him: they are CHRIST's, and not his; therefore desire him to show them kindness, and to be good to their souls. It may be, that my parish forget me; but my witness is in heaven, I do not forget them; they are my sighs in the night, and my tears in the day. I think

myself like a husband plucked from the wife of his youth. O LORD, be my judge, what joy it would be to my soul, to hear that my ministry hath left the SON of GOD among them! Remember my love to your son and daughter; desire them from me to seek the LORD in their youth, and to give him the morning of their days. Acquaint them with the word of GOD and prayer. Grace be with you! Pray for the prisoner of CHRIST: In my heart I forget you not.

Aberdeen,
March 6, 1637.

Your lawful and loving Pastor,
S. R.



TO THE VISCOUNTESS OF KENMURE.

MADAM,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, to you. I love *careful*, and withal *doing* complaints of want of practice; because I observe many, who think it holiness enough to complain, and set themselves to nothing,—as if to say “I am sick,” would cure them; they think complaints a good charm for guiltiness. I hope ye are wrestling and struggling on, in this dead age, wherein folks have lost tongue, and legs, and arms, for CHRIST. I urge upon you, Madam, a nearer communion with CHRIST, and a growing communion. There are curtains to be drawn aside, in CHRIST, that we never saw, and new foldings of love in him. Therefore, dig deep, and sweat, and labour, and take pains for him; and set by as much time in the day for him as you can; he will be won with labour. I know not what to do with CHRIST; his love surroundeth and surchargeth me; I am burdened with it; but O how sweet and lovely is that burden! I cannot keep it within me. I am so in love with his love, that, if his love were not in heaven, I would be unwilling to go there. I wonder what he meaneth, to put such a slave at his own elbow. But I dare not refuse to be loved; the cause is not in me why he hath looked upon me, and loved

me; for it cost me nothing; it is good, cheap love. The greatest part but play with Christianity; they put it by easily. I thought it had been an easy thing to be a Christian, and that to seek God had been at the next door; but O the windings, the turnings, the ups and the downs, through which he hath led me; and I see yet much way to the ford! He speaketh with my reins in the night-season; and in the morning, when I awake, I find his love in my heart. Who will help me to praise? Who will come to lift with me, and set on high his great love? As for friends, I shall not think the world to be the world, if that well go not dry. I trust in God, to use the world as a cunning master doth a knavish servant; he giveth him no handling or credit, only he intrusteth him with common errands, wherein he cannot play the knave. I pray God I may not give this world credit of my joys, and comforts, and confidence; that were to put CHRIST out of his office. Nay, I counsel you, Madam, let CHRIST keep the great seal; and intrust him so, as to hang your vessels, great and small, upon the nail fastened in DAVID'S house. Now the presence of the great Angel of the Covenant be with you, and that sweet child!

Aberdeen,
March 7, 1637.

Yours in Jesus,
S. R.



TO THE VISCOUNTESS OF KENMURE.

MADAM,

UPON the offered opportunity of this worthy bearer, I could not omit to answer the heads of your letter.—1. I think not much to set down in paper some good things of CHRIST, and to feed my soul with wishes to be one with CHRIST; for a wish is but a broken and half love; but verily to “come and see” is a harder matter: but, oh, I have rather smoke than fire: I have little or nothing to say, but that I am one who hath found favour in his eyes.—2. You write that I am filled with knowledge, and stand not in need of these warnings: but certainly my light is

dim; and how many have full coffers, and yet empty bellies! Light, and the saving use of light, are far different. O what need have I to have the ashes blown away from my dying fire! I may be a book-man, and yet be an idiot and a stark fool in CHRIST's way. Therefore as night-watchers hold one another waking, by speaking to one another, so have we need to hold one another on foot: sleep stealeth away the light of watching, even the light that reproveth sleeping. I doubt not but more would reach heaven, if they believed not heaven to be at the next door. The world's negative holiness, "no adulterer, no murderer, no thief," maketh men believe they are already saints.—3. I find you complaining of yourself, and it becometh a sinner so to do. I would love my pain and soreness with my wounds, although these should bereave me of my night's sleep, better than my wounds without pain.—4. Be not afraid for little grace. Our split works, losses, deadness, coldness, wretchedness, are the ground on which the good husbandman laboureth.—5. You write that his compassions fail not, notwithstanding that your service to CHRIST miscarrieth. To that I answer, God forbid that there were buying and selling betwixt CHRIST and us; for then free grace might go to play. But all the vessels, great and small, that we have, are fastened upon the sure nail. (*Isai. xxii. 24.*) The only danger is, that we give grace more to do, than God giveth it, that is, by turning his grace into wantonness. Grace be with you!

Aberdeen,
March 14, 1637.

Yours in his LORD JESUS,
S. R.



TO THE LADY HALHILL.

DEAR AND CHRISTIAN LADY,
GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you! I cannot but acquaint your Ladyship with the kind dealing of CHRIST to my soul in this house of my pilgrimage; that your Lady-

ship may know that CHRIST is as good as he is called. For, at my first entry into this trial, (being troubled with jealousies of his love, whose name and testimony I now bear in my bonds,) I feared nothing more, than that I was cast over the dike of the vineyard, as a dry tree; but blessed be his great name, the dry tree was in the fire, and was not burned; his dew came down and quickened the root of a withered plant; and now he is come again with joy, and hath been pleased to feast his afflicted prisoner with the joys of his consolations. Now I weep, but am not sad: I am chastened, but I die not: I have loss, but I want nothing: this water cannot drown me, this fire cannot burn me, because of "the good-will of Him that dwelt in the bush." The worst things of CHRIST, his reproaches, or his cross, are better than Egypt's treasures. He hath opened his door, and taken into his "banqueting house" a poor sinner, and hath left me so "sick of love" for my LORD JESUS, that if heaven were at my disposal, I would give it for CHRIST, and would not be content to go to heaven, except I were persuaded CHRIST were there. I would not give nor exchange my sighs for all the world's laughter. This clay-idol, the world, hath no great court in my soul: CHRIST hath come, and carried away with him to heaven my heart and my love, so that neither heart nor love is mine; I pray GOD, that CHRIST may keep both without reversion. If my part of this world's clay were sold, I would think it dear at the price of a drink of water. I see CHRIST's love is so kingly, that it must have a throne all alone in the soul. I see apples beguile children, although they be worm-eaten; and so the moth-eaten pleasures of this present world make children believe that ten is a hundred: and yet all that are here are but shadows; if they would draw aside the curtain that hangs betwixt them and CHRIST, they would think themselves fools, who have so long mistaken the SON OF GOD. I seek no more, next to heaven, but that he may be glorified in a prisoner of CHRIST; and that in my behalf many would praise his high and glorious name, who heareth the

sighing of the prisoner. The grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST be with you!

Aberdeen,
March 14, 1637.

Yours in his LORD JESUS;
S. R.



TO MR. THOMAS GARVEN.

REVEREND AND DEAR BROTHER,

I BLESS you for your letter; it was as a shower to the new-mown grass. The LORD hath given you the tongue of the learned; be fruitful and humble. It is possible that you may come to my case; but the water is neither so deep, nor the stream so strong, as it is called. I think my fire is not hot; my water is dry land; my loss rich loss. My poor stock is grown, since I came to Aberdeen. And if any had known the wrong I did, in being jealous of such a lover as CHRIST, who withheld not his love from me, they would think the more of it; but, I see, he must be above me in mercy: I will never strive with him; to think to recompense him is folly. If I had as many tongues to praise him as there have fallen drops of rain since the creation, or as there are leaves of trees in all the forests of the earth, or stars in the heaven; yet my LORD JESUS would ever be in advance with me: we shall never get our accounts fitted; a pardon must close the reckoning. For his comforts to me, in this honourable cause, have almost put me beyond the bounds of modesty; howbeit I will not let every one know what is betwixt us. Love (I mean CHRIST's love) is the hottest coal that ever I felt: cast all the salt sea on it, it will flame: hell cannot quench it: many, many waters will not quench love. I wonder that he should waste so much love upon such a waster as I am; but he is abundant in mercy; he hath no niggard's alms, when he is pleased to give. O that I could invite all the nations to love him! Free grace is an unknown thing! This world hath heard but a bare name of CHRIST. I

would that **CHRIST** got more of his own due than he doth. Brother, ye have chosen the good part, who have taken part with **CHRIST**: you will see him win the field, and you shall get part of the spoil, when he divideth it. They are but fools who laugh at us, for they see but the back part of the moon; yet our moon-light is better than their twelve-hours' sun: we have gotten the new heavens, and as a pledge of that, the Bridegroom's love-ring. The children of the wedding-chamber have cause to skip and leap for joy; for the marriage-supper is drawing nigh. O time, be not slow! O sun, move speedily, and hasten our banquet! O Bridegroom, be "like a roe, or a young hart upon the mountains!" O Well-beloved, run fast, that we may once meet! Brother, I restrain myself, for want of time. Pray for me: I hope to remember you. The goodwill of Him who dwelt in the bush, the tender mercies of **GOD** in **CHRIST**, enrich you: grace be with you!

Aberdeen,
March 14, 1637.

Yours in his **LORD JESUS**,

S. R.



TO THE LAIRD OF CARLETOUN.

MUCH-HONOURED SIR,

I WILL not impute your not writing to me, to forgetfulness. However, I have one above who forgetteth me not; nay, he groweth in his kindness. It hath pleased his holy **MAJESTY** to take me from the pulpit, and teach me many things in my exile, that were mysteries to me before.—
1. I see his bottomless and boundless love, and my jealousies and ravings, which, at my first entry into this furnace, were so foolish and bold, as to say to **CHRIST**, who is truth itself, in his face, "Thou liest!" I had well nigh lost my hold: I wondered if it was **CHRIST** or not; for the mist and smoke of my heart made me mistake my master **JESUS**. My faith was dim, and my hope frozen and cold; and my love, which caused jealousies, had some heat

and smoke, but no flame at all. I thought I had forfeited all my rights; but the Tempter was too much upon my counsels. Alas! I knew not how good skill my intercessor and advocate, CHRIST, hath in pleading for me, and pardoning me such follies. Now he is returned to my soul "with healing under his wings;" and I am nothing behind with CHRIST now, for he hath overpaid me, by his presence, the pain I was put to by waiting. And now, what want I on earth, that CHRIST can give to a poor prisoner? O how sweet and lovely is he now! Alas that I can get none to help me to lift up my LORD JESUS upon his throne above all the earth!—2. I am now brought to some measure of submission, and I resolve to wait till I see what my LORD will do with me. I dare not now speak one word against the all-seeing and over-watching Providence of my LORD. I see that Providence runneth not on broken wheels; but I, like a fool, carved a providence for mine own ease, to die in my nest, and to sleep still, till my grey hairs, and to lie on the sunny side of the mountain in my ministry at Anwoth. But now I have nothing to say against Kedar's tents, where I live, far from my acquaintance, my lovers, and my friends. I see that God hath the world on his wheels, and casteth it as a potter doth a vessel on the wheel. I dare not say that there is any inordinate or irregular motion in Providence; the LORD hath done it: I will not go to law with CHRIST, for I should gain nothing by that.—3. I have learned some greater mortification, and not to mourn after, or seek, the world's dry breasts. Nay, my LORD hath filled me with such dainties, that I am like a full banqueter, who is not for common cheer. What have I to do, to fall down and worship mankind's great idol, the world? I have a better God than any clay-god: nay, at present, I care not if I give this world a discharge for bread and water. I know, it is not my home, nor my Father's house; it is but his footstool: let bastards take it.—4. I find it most true, that the greatest temptation out of hell is, to live without temptations. If my waters should stand, they would rot: faith is the better

for the free air, and the sharp winter storms, in its face; grace withereth without adversity: the Devil is but God's master-fencer, to teach us to handle our weapons.—5. I never knew how weak I was, till now, when he hideth himself, and when I have him to seek seven times a day. I am a dry and withered branch, and a piece of a dead carcase, dry bones, and not able to step over a straw: so feeble is my soul, that I think it is like a tender man's skin, that may touch nothing: you see how short I should shoot of the prize, if his grace were not sufficient for me. The prisoner's blessing be upon you!

Aberdeen,
March 14, 1637.

Yours in his LORD JESUS,

S. R.

TO JOHN BELL, THE ELDER.

MY VERY LOVING FRIEND,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you. I beseech you in the LORD JESUS, to mind your country above; and now, when old age,—the twilight going before the darkness of the grave, and the falling low of your sun before your night,—is come upon you, advise with CHRIST, ere you put your foot in the ship, and turn your back on this life. Many are beguiled with this, that they are free from scandalous abominations: but the tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is for the fire; the man that is not born again, cannot enter into the kingdom of God; common honesty will not take men to heaven. Alas that men should think they ever met with CHRIST, who had never a sick night, through the terrors of God in their soul, or a sore heart for sin! I know, the LORD hath given you light, and the knowledge of his will; but that is not all, neither will that do. I wish you an awakened soul, and that you may not beguile yourself in the matter of your salvation. My dear brother, search yourself with the candle of God; and try if the life of God and CHRIST be in you. Salvation is

not cast to every man's door. Many are carried over sea and land, to a far country, in a ship, while they sleep much of the way ; but men are not landed at heaven sleeping. The righteous are "scarcely saved ;" and many run as fast as either you or I, who miss the prize and the crown. God send me salvation, and save me from a disappointment ! Men think it but a stride or step over to heaven ; but when so few are saved, even of a number like the sand of the sea,—but a handful and a remnant, as God's word saith,—what cause have we to shake ourselves, and to ask our poor soul, "Whither goest thou ? Where shalt thou lodge at night ? Where are thy charters of thy heavenly inheritance ?" O see, see that you give not your salvation a wrong cast, and think all is well, and leave your soul loose and uncertain. Look to your building, and to your ground-stone, and what signs of CHRIST are in you, and set this world behind your back. It is time, now in the evening, to cease from your ordinary work, and high time to know of your lodging at night. It is your salvation that is in dependence ; and that is a great and weighty business, though many make light of the matter. Now the LORD enable you by his grace to work it out !

Your lawful and loving Pastor,

Aberdeen, 1637.

S. R.



TO WILLIAM GORDON, OF ROBERTOUN.

DEAR BROTHER,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you ! So often as I think of our fighting life in the field, while we are here, I am forced to say, that prisoners in a dungeon, condemned to want the light of the sun and candle till their dying day, are not so much to be pitied as we are. For they, weary of their life, hate their prison ; but we in our prison drink ourselves drunk with the night-pleasures of our weak dreams, and we long for no better life than this. But at

the blast of the last trumpet, and the shout of the Archangel, when GOD shall take down the shepherd's tent of this fading world, we shall not have so much as a drink of water of all the dreams that we now build on. Alas! that the sharp and bitter blasts which meet us in this life, have not made us dead to this world! We buy our own sorrow, and we pay dear for it, when we spend our love, our joy, our desires, our confidence, upon a handful of snow and ice, which time will melt away; and go thirsty out of the drunken inns, when all is done. Alas! that we inquire not for the clear fountain; but are so foolish, as to drink foul, muddy waters, even till our bed-time; and then, in the resurrection, when we shall be awakened, sick, sick shall many a soul be! I know no wholesome fountain but one; I know not a thing worth the buying but heaven. And my mind is, if comparison were made betwixt CHRIST and heaven, I would sell heaven and buy CHRIST. O that I could cry up CHRIST in men's estimation, ten thousand talents more than men think of him! But they are crying him down, or else exchanging CHRIST with the miserable old fallen house of this vain world; or they lend him out upon interest, and play the usurers with CHRIST: because they profess him, and give out before men that CHRIST is their treasure and stock, and, in the mean time, praise of men, and a name, and ease, are the usury they would be at; so when the trial cometh, they quit the stock for the interest, and lose all. Happy are they, who can keep CHRIST alone, and keep him clean and whole, till GOD come and count with them. I know, in your heavy trials long since, you thought highly of CHRIST; but truly no cross should be old to us: we should not forget them, because years are come betwixt us and them, and cast them by, as we do old clothes; we may make a cross, which is old in time, new in use, and as fruitful as in the beginning of it. GOD is what he was seven years ago, whatever change be in us: I speak not this as if I thought you had forgotten what GOD did to have your love long since; but that you may awake yourself in this sleepy age,

and remember CHRIST's first wooing your love, and try if he got his answer, or if ye be yet to give him it. For I find in myself, that water runneth not faster through a sieve, than our warnings slip from us. I bless his great name, who is no niggard in holding crosses upon me, that he may save me from this perishing world. How plentiful GOD is in means of this kind, is esteemed by many one of GOD's unkind mercies; but CHRIST's cross is neither a cruel nor unkind mercy, but the love-token of a father. I am sure, a lover, chasing us in order to have our love, should not be fled from. GOD send me no worse mercy than the sanctified cross of CHRIST, and I am sure I should be happy. Pray for me, that I may find house-room in the LORD's house, to speak in his name. Grace, grace be with you!

Yours in Jesus,

Aberdeen, 1636.

S. R.



TO CARDONESS, ELDER.

MUCH HONOURED SIR,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you! I have longed to hear from you, and to know the state of your soul, and the state of that people with you. I beseech you, Sir, by the mercies of GOD, make sure work of your salvation. If ye be upon sinking sand, a storm of death will loose CHRIST and you, and wash you off the rock: O, for the LORD's sake, look narrowly to the work. Read over your life, with the light of GOD; for salvation is not cast down at every man's door. It is good to look to your compass, and all ye have need of, before ye take shipping; for no wind can blow you back again. Remember, when the race is ended, and the play either won or lost, and ye are in the utmost circle and border of time, and shall put your foot within eternity, and all your good things of this short night-dream shall seem to you like the ashes of a blaze of thorns; then shall your soul be more glad at one of your LORD's smiles, than if ye had the charters of three worlds

for all eternity. Now when old age, like death's long shadow, is casting a covering upon your days, it is no time to court this vain life; seek rest for your soul in God through CHRIST. Believe me, I find it hard wrestling, to keep good quarters with him, and to keep a constant course of sound and solid daily communion with CHRIST: temptations are daily breaking the thread of that course, and it is not easy to cast a knot again. O how fair have many ships been playing before the wind, that, in an hour's space, have been lying in the sea-bottom! How many professors cast a lustre, as if they were pure gold, and yet are but base and reprobate metal! And how many keep breath in their race many miles, and yet come short of the prize. Dear Sir, my soul would mourn in secret for you, if I knew your case with God to be but false work. Those who had never sick nights nor days for sin, have but such a peace with God as will end in a sad war. I always saw nature lofty, heady, and strong in you; and it was more for you to be dead to the world than a common man: ye will take a deep cut, and a long lance, to go to the bottom of your wounds, in saving humiliation. Be humbled, walk softly; down, down, for God's sake, with your top-sail; stoop, stoop; it is a low entry to go in at heaven's gates. There is infinite justice in the party ye have to do with: it is his nature not to acquit the guilty: the law of God will not want one farthing of the sinner: God forgetteth not both the surety and the sinner; and every man must pay, either in his own person, (O LORD, save you from that payment,) or in his surety, CHRIST. Come in, come in to CHRIST, and see what you want, and find it in him. I dare say, angels' pens, angels' tongues, nay, as many worlds of angels as there are drops of water in all the seas, and fountains, and rivers of the earth, cannot paint him out to you. I think, his sweetness, since I was a prisoner, hath swelled upon me to the greatness of two heavens. O for a soul as wide as the utmost circle of the highest heaven; that containeth all, to contain his love!—and even then I could hold little of it. O what a sight to be

up in heaven, in that fair orchard of the new paradise; and to see, and smell, and taste, and touch that Tree of Life! Woe, woe is me, that sin hath made so many madmen, seeking the fools' paradise, some good and desirable thing, without and apart from CHRIST. CHRIST, CHRIST, nothing but CHRIST, can cool our love's burning languor. O thirsty love! wilt thou set CHRIST, the well of life, to thy head, and drink thy fill? Pray for me, his prisoner of hope. I pray for you without ceasing. I write my blessing, my earnest prayers, the love of God, and the sweet presence of CHRIST, to you and yours. Grace, grace be with you!

Your lawful and loving Pastor,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1637.



TO CARDONESS, YOUNGER.

MUCH HONOURED SIR,

I LONG to hear whether or not your soul be engaged with CHRIST. Lose time no longer; flee the follies of youth; gird up the loins of your mind; and make you ready for meeting the LORD. I have often summoned you, and now I summon you again, to compear before your Judge, to make a reckoning of your life; while ye have time, look upon your papers, and consider your ways. O that there were such a heart in you, as to think what an ill conscience will be to you when ye are upon the border of eternity, and your one foot out of time! O then, ten thousand floods of tears cannot extinguish these flames, or purchase to you one hour's release from that pain! O how sweet a day have ye had! But this is a fair-day that runneth fast away; see how ye have spent it, and consider the necessity of salvation, and tell me (in the fear of God) if ye have made it sure. I am persuaded, ye have a conscience that will be speaking somewhat to you: why will ye die and destroy yourself? I charge you, in CHRIST'S name, to rouse up your conscience, and begin to contract

with CHRIST in time, while salvation is in your offer :
“ This is the accepted time, this is the day of salvation.”
Play the merchant, for ye cannot expect another market-day when this is done ; therefore let me again beseech you to consider, “ in this your day, the things that belong to your peace.” Fulfil my joy, and begin to seek the LORD while he may be found : forsake the follies of deceiving youth ; and lay hold upon eternal life. Whoring, drinking, mispending the Sabbath, neglecting of prayer in your house, and refusing an offered salvation, will burn up your soul with the terrors of the ALMIGHTY, when your awakened conscience shall flee in your face. Sir, I have not a tongue to express the glory that is laid up for you in your Father's house, if ye frame your heart to return to the LORD. Ye know, this world is but a shadow, a short-living creature, under the law of time ; within less than fifty years, when ye look back to it, ye shall laugh at the vanishing vanities thereof, as feathers flying in the air, and as the houses of sand within the sea-mark, which the children of men are building. Give up courting this vain world : seek not the bastard's moveables, but the son's heritage in heaven. Take trial of CHRIST, look unto him, and his love shall so change you, that ye shall never choose to go from him. I have experience of his sweetness in this house of my pilgrimage here : my witness, who is above, knoweth that I would not exchange my sighs and tears with the laughter of the fourteen Prelates. There is nothing which will make you a Christian indeed, but a taste of the sweetness of CHRIST ; — “ Come and see,” will speak best to your soul. I would fain hope good of you. Be not discouraged at broken resolutions ; but to it, and to it again : woo CHRIST, till ye get your soul espoused as a chaste virgin to him ; use the means of profiting, pray in your family, and read the word ; remember how our LORD's day was spent when I was among you. It will be a great challenge to you before God, if you forget the good that was done within the walls of your house on the LORD's day, and if you turn aside after the fashions of this world, and if you go not to the

public worship of God. Give God some of your time, both in the morning, evening, and afternoon; and in so doing, rejoice the heart of a poor prisoner.

Now He that brought again from the dead the Shepherd of his sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, establish your heart with his grace, and present you before his presence with joy.

Your affectionate and loving Pastor,

Aberdeen, 1637.

S. R.



TO THE LADY BUSBIE.

I know, ye are thinking sometimes what CHRIST is doing in Zion. O that this nation would be awakened, to cry mightily unto God for the setting up of a new tabernacle to CHRIST! O that this kingdom knew how worthy CHRIST is of his room! His worth was ever above man's estimation of him. And, for myself, I am pained at the heart, that I cannot find myself disposed to leave myself, and go wholly in to CHRIST. Alas that there should be one bit of me out of him, and that we leave too much liberty and latitude for ourselves, and our own ease, and credit, and pleasures, and so little room for CHRIST! O what pains and charges it costeth CHRIST before he gets us! And, when all is done, we are not worth the having: it is a wonder that he should seek the like of us; but love overlooketh blackness; for, if it had not been so, CHRIST would never have made so fair and blessed a bargain with us as the covenant of grace is. Our LORD intendeth, in all our sufferings, to bring grace into request amongst us. I should come short of heaven, if I had no more but my own strength to support me; and if CHRIST should say to me, "Either do or die," it were easy to determine what should become of me: The choice is very easy, for I behoved to die, if CHRIST should pass by with straitened

bowels; and who then would take us up in our straits? I know CHRIST is kindest in his love when we are at our weakest, else "the waters had gone over our soul." His mercy hath a set period and appointed place, how far, and no farther, the sea of affliction shall flow, and where the waves thereof shall be stayed: He prescribeth how much pain and sorrow, both for weight and measure, we must have. Ye have then good cause to recall your love from all lovers, and give it to CHRIST: He who is afflicted in all your afflictions, looketh not on you, in your sad hours, with an insensible heart or dry eyes. All the LORD's children may see, that it is lost love which is bestowed upon this perishing world: Death and judgment will make men lament that ever their miscarrying hearts carried them to lavish their love upon false appearances. Alas that CHRIST should fare the worse, because of his own goodness in making peace and the Gospel ride together; and that we have never yet weighed the worth of CHRIST and his ordinances; and that we are like to be deprived of the well, before we have tasted the sweetness of the water! It may be that with watery eyes, and a wet face, and wearied feet, we may seek CHRIST, and shall not find him. O that this land were humbled in time; and, by prayers, cries, and humiliation, would bring CHRIST in at the church-door again, now when his back is turned towards us, and he is gone to the threshold, and his one foot (as it were) is out of the door! I am sure his departure is our deserving, we have bought it with our iniquities; for, alas! professors are made all of shows and fashions, and are not at pains to recover themselves again. Every one contenteth himself with a stinted measure of godliness, as if that were enough to bring them to heaven. We forget, that as our gifts and light grow, so God's gain and the interest of his talents should grow also; and that we cannot pay God with the old use, which we gave him seven years ago; for this were to mock the LORD. O what difficulty is there in our christian journey, and how often come we short of many thousand things that are CHRIST's due! I remember you

unto the LORD, as I am able : I entreat you, think upon me his prisoner, and pray, that the LORD would be pleased to give me room to speak to his people in his name. Grace, grace be with you !

Yours in his Lord and Master,

S. R.

Aberdeen, 1636.



TO ROBERT GORDON, OF KNOCKBREX.

DEAR BROTHER,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you ! I received your letter from Edinburgh. I would not wish to see another heaven, until I get mine own heaven ; but a new moon like the light of the sun, and a new sun like the light of seven days, shining upon my poor self, and the Church of Jews and Gentiles, and upon my withered and sun-burnt mother the Church of Scotland, and upon her sister-churches England and Ireland ; and to have this done, to the exaltation of our great King : It matters not, although I were separate from CHRIST, and had a sense of ten thousand years' pain in hell, if this were. Dear brother, I am for the present in no small battle betwixt felt guiltiness, and pining longings for my Well-beloved. Alas ! I think CHRIST's love playeth the niggard to me ; and I know it is not a scarcity of love, there is enough in him : but my hunger prophesieth sparingness in CHRIST ; for I have but little of him, and little of his sweetness ; yet there is such joy in hunger for CHRIST, that if I had no other heaven but a continual thirst for CHRIST, this were still a heaven to me. I am sure CHRIST's love cannot be cruel ; it must be a pitiful, a melting-hearted love : but suspension of that love, I think, is half a hell, and the want of it is a whole hell. When I look to my guiltiness, I see my salvation one of my Saviour's greatest miracles either in heaven or earth ; I am sure, I may defy any man to show me a greater wonder : but seeing I have no hire, no money for CHRIST, he must either take me with want, misery, and cor-

ruption, or want me. I have now made a new question, whether CHRIST be more to be loved for giving sanctification, or for free justification? And I hold he is more to be loved for sanctification. It is in some respect greater love in him to sanctify than to justify; for he maketh us most like himself, in his own essential portraiture and image, in sanctifying us: justification doth but make us happy, which is to be like the angels only. Neither is it such a misery, to lie a condemned man, as to serve sin, and work the works of the Devil; and therefore, I think, sanctification cannot be bought, it is above price. God be thanked for ever, that CHRIST was a price for sanctification. Let a sinner (if it were possible) lie in hell for ever,—if he make him truly holy, and let him lie there burning in love to God, rejoicing in the HOLY GHOST, and hanging upon CHRIST by faith and hope, that is heaven in the heart and bottom of hell. Grace, grace be with you!

Yours in his lovely and longed-for LORD JESUS,

Aberdeen, 1637.

S. R.



TO CARLETOUN.

Worthy and much-honoured,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you! I received your letter from my brother, to which I now answer particularly. I confess two things of myself:—1. Woe, woe is me, that men should think there is any thing in me: He is my witness, before whom I am as crystal, that the secret house-devils, that bear me too often company, and that this sink of corruption which I find within, make me go with low sails; and, if others saw what I see, they would look by me, but not to me.—2. I know that this shower of his free grace behoved to be on me, otherwise I would have withered. I know also, that I have need of a buffeting Tempter, that grace may be put to exercise, and I kept low. Worthy and dear brother in our LORD JESUS, I write that from my heart which ye now read.—1. I vouch, that CHRIST, and

sweating and sighing under his cross, are sweeter to me by far, than all the kingdoms of the world.—2. If you and my dearest acquaintance in CHRIST reap any fruit by my suffering, let me be weighed in GOD's even balance, if my joy be not fulfilled: What am I, to carry the marks of such a great King? But although I am a sinful mass, my LORD JESUS can hew heaven out of worse timber than I am, if worse can be.—3. I now rejoice with joy unspeakable and glorious, that I have desired to have and keep CHRIST all alone, and that he should never rub clothes with the harlot of Rome. I am now fully paid; so that nothing aileth me for the present, but anxious desires for a real possession of my Well-beloved. I have gotten the choicest of CHRIST's crosses,—to bear witness to the truth; and herein find I liberty, joy, life, comfort, love, faith, submission, patience, and resolution to take delight in waiting: and withal, in my race, he hath come near to me, and let me see the crown. What then want I but real enjoyment, which is reserved to my country? Let no man think that he shall lose at CHRIST's hands in suffering for him.—4. As to these present trials, they are most dangerous. For people shall be stolen off their feet with plausible pretences of indifferency; but it is the power of the great Antichrist working in this land. Woe, woe, woe be to apostate Scotland; there is wrath, and a cup of the red wine of the wrath of GOD almighty in the LORD's hand, that they shall drink, and fall, and not rise again. The star, called "Wormwood and Gall," is fallen into the fountains and rivers, and hath made them bitter. The sword of the LORD is furbished against the idol-shepherds of the land; all hearts shall be faint, and all knees shall tremble. An end is coming; the leopard and the lion shall watch over our cities; houses great and fair shall be desolate, without an inhabitant.—5. I am assaulted by the learned and pregnant wits of this kingdom; but, all honour be to my LORD, truth but laughs at disputers of this world; GOD's wisdom confoundeth them; and CHRIST triumpheth in his own strong truth, that speaketh for itself.—6. Let my con-

ceptions of CHRIST's love go to the grave with me, and to hell with me, I may not, I dare not quit them. I hope to keep CHRIST's pawn: if he never come to loose it, let him see to his own promise. I know that presumption, although it be made of stoutness, will not thus be wilful in heavy trials. Now, my dearest in CHRIST, the great Messenger of the Covenant, the only wise and all-sufficient JEHOVAH, establish you to the end! I hear the LORD hath been at your house, and hath called home your wife to her rest. I know, Sir, ye see the LORD loosing the pins of your tabernacle, and wooing your love from this over-gilded world, and calling upon you to be making yourself ready to go to your Father's country. Ye know, to "send the Comforter" was a King's word when he ascended on high: ye have claim to, and interest in, that promise. All love, all mercy, all grace and peace, all multiplied saving consolations, all joy and faith in CHRIST, all stability and confirming strength of grace, and the good-will of Him that dwelt in the bush, be with you!

Your unworthy brother in the LORD JESUS,

Aberdeen,
June 15, 1637.

S. R.



TO MARION MACKNAUGHT.

Worthy and dearest in the LORD,

I EVER loved (since I knew you) that little vineyard of the LORD's planting in Galloway; but now much more, since I have heard that He, who "hath his fire in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem," hath been pleased to set up a furnace amongst you, with the first in this kingdom. This fire shall be quenched, so soon as CHRIST hath brought you pure through the fire. Therefore, my dearly beloved in the LORD, fear not. Charge an unbelieving heart, under the pain of treason against our great and royal King JESUS, to dependence by faith on our LORD. Get you into your chambers, and shut the doors about you; in, in with speed to your strong hold, ye prisoners of

hope; ye doves, flee in to CHRIST's windows, till the indignation be over, and the storm be past. Glorify the LORD in your sufferings, and take his banner of love and spread over you. Others will follow you, if they see you strong in the LORD; their courage shall take life from your christian carriage. Look up and see who is coming; lift up your head; he is coming to save, "in garments dyed in blood, and travelling in the greatness of his strength." I laugh, I smile, I leap for joy, to see CHRIST coming to save you so quickly. O what wide steps CHRIST taketh! Three or four hills are but a step to him; "he skippeth over the mountains." CHRIST hath set a battle betwixt his poor weak saints and his enemies. He saith to the enemies, Take you a sword of steel, law, authority, parliaments, and kings upon your side; that is your armour. And he saith to his saints, I give you a sword in your hand, and that is suffering, receiving of strokes, spoiling of your goods; and with your sword ye shall get and gain the victory. Ye are CHRIST's members, and he is drawing his members through the thorny hedge up to heaven after him. I am careless, and stand not much on this, although loins, back, shoulders, and head, split in pieces, in stepping up to my Father's house. I know that my LORD can make long, and broad, and high, and deep glory to his name, out of this poor body; for CHRIST looketh not what stuff he maketh glory out of. My dearly beloved, ye have often refreshed me, but that is put up in my Master's accounts; ye have him debtor for me. But if ye will do any thing for me (as I know ye will) now in my extremity, tell all my dear friends, that a prisoner is fettered and chained in CHRIST's love; (LORD, never loose the fetters;) and ye and they together, take my heartiest commendations to my LORD JESUS, and thank him for a poor friend. I desire your husband to read this letter; I send him a prisoner's blessing. I will be obliged to him, if he will be willing to suffer for my dear Master; suffering is the professor's golden garment; there shall be no losses on CHRIST's side of it. Grace be with you: a prisoner's blessing be with

you ! I write it, and abide by it, God shall be glorious in MARION MACKNAUGHT, when this stormy blast shall be over. O woman, beloved of God, believe, rejoice, be strong in the LORD ; grace is thy portion !

Aberdeen,
June 15, 1637.

Yours in his LORD JESUS,
S. R.



TO THE LADY CULROSS.

MADAM,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you ! I am the first in the kingdom put to utter silence. I cannot preach my LORD's righteousness in the great congregation. I am, notwithstanding, the less solicitous how it go, if there be not wrath in my cup. But I rest on this, that in my fever my Physician is at my bed-side, and that he sympathizeth with me when I sigh. Another man's bed and fire-side, and other losses, have no room in my sorrow : a greater heat, to eat out a less fire, is a good remedy for some burning. I believe, when CHRIST draweth blood, he hath skill to cut the right vein ; and that he hath taken the whole ordering and disposing of my sufferings. Let Him tutor me, and tutor my crosses, as he thinketh good : there is no danger nor hazard in following such a guide, although he should lead me through hell, if I could put faith foremost, believing to see the salvation of God. I know, CHRIST is not obliged to let me see both the sides of my cross, or to turn it over and over, that I may see all : my faith is richer to live upon credit, CHRIST's borrowed money, than to have much in my hand. Let me be a sinner, and worse than the chief of sinners, yea, a guilty Devil, yet I am sure my Well-beloved is God : and when I say, "CHRIST is God," and "My CHRIST is God," I have said all things ; I can say no more. I would I could build as much upon this, "My CHRIST is God," as it would bear. I might lay all the world upon it. But my wounds are

sorest, and pain me most, when I sin against his love and his mercy: and if he would set me and my conscience together, and let us settle it betwixt us, my spitting upon the fair face of CHRIST's love and mercies, by my jealousies, unbelief, and doubting, would be enough to sink me. O LORD, I stand dumb before thee for this; I still misbelieve, though I have seen that my LORD hath made my cross as it were all crystal, so that I can see through it CHRIST and heaven, and that GOD hath honoured a lump of sinful flesh and blood, to be CHRIST's honourable lord-prisoner. I ought to esteem the walls of a filthy dungeon most beautiful, for my LORD JESUS; and yet I am not so shut up, but that the sun shineth upon my prison, and the fair wide heaven is the covering of it. But my LORD hath done more; for he makes me find, that he will be a prisoner with me: he lieth down, and riseth up with me; when I sigh, he sigheth; when I weep, he suffereth with me. And I confess here is the blessed issue of my suffering already begun, in that my heart is filled with hunger and desire to have him glorified in my sufferings. I have no more free goods in the world for CHRIST, saye that: it is both the whole heritage I have, and all my moveables besides; "LORD, give the thirsty man to drink." I would not have CHRIST's love entering in me, but I would enter into it, and be swallowed up of it. Blessed be my rich LORD JESUS, who sendeth not away beggars from his house! He filleth the vessel of such as will come and seek: we might beg ourselves rich, (if we were wise,) if we could but hold out withered hands to CHRIST, and learn to seek, ask, and knock. Madam, let me have your prayers, as ye have the prayers and blessing of him that is separated from his brethren. Grace, grace be with you! Your own in his LORD JESUS,

Aberdeen,

S. R.

June 15, 1637.



TO JOHN GORDON, OF CARDONESS, ELDER.

Much honoured and dearest in the LORD,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you! My soul longeth exceedingly to hear how matters go betwixt you and CHRIST; and whether or not there be any work of CHRIST in that parish, that will abide the trial of fire and water. Let me be weighed of my LORD in a just balance, if your souls lie not weighty upon me. You go to bed and you rise with me; thoughts of your soul depart not from me in my sleep; ye have a great part of my tears, sighs, and prayers. O that I could buy your soul's salvation with any suffering whatsoever, and that ye and I might meet with joy before our Judge! O may my LORD forbid that I should have any thing against you in that day! O that He who quickeneth the dead would give life to my sowing among you! What joy, on this side of death, would comfort me more, than that the souls of that poor people were in safety? Sure I am, that once I discovered my lovely LORD JESUS to you all: woe shall be your part for evermore, if the Gospel be not the savour of life unto life to you. Believe me, I find heaven a city hard to be won. "The righteous scarcely are saved." O what violence of thronging will heaven take! Alas, I see many deceiving themselves; for we will all profess to go to heaven. Now, every foul dog, with his foul feet, will in to the new and clean Jerusalem. All say they have faith; and the greatest part in the world know not, and will not consider, that a slip in the matter of their salvation, is the most pitiful slip that can be, and that no loss is comparable to this loss. Ye will not believe how quickly the Judge will come. And for yourself, I know that death is waiting, and hovering, and lingering at God's command, that ye may be prepared. Then ye had need to stir your time; a wrong step in going out of life is like the sin against the HOLY GHOST, and can never be forgiven, because ye cannot come back again, through the

last water, to mourn for it. Lose not the last play, whatever ye do; for, in that play with death, your precious soul is the prize: for the LORD's sake lose not such a treasure. Ye know, out of love to your soul, and out of desire to make an honest account for you, I testified my disliking of your ways very often, both in private and public. I am not now a witness of your doings, but your Judge is always your witness. I beseech you by the mercies of God, by the salvation of your soul, by your comforts when your eye-strings shall break, and the face wax pale, and the soul tremble to be out of the lodging of clay, and by your appearance before your awful Judge, after the sight of this letter take a new course; and now, in the end of your day, make sure of heaven. Examine yourself, if ye be in good earnest in CHRIST. Many think they believe, but never tremble: the devils are further on than these. Make sure to yourself that ye are above ordinary professors; the sixth part of your span-length of days is scarcely before you: haste, haste; for the tide will not abide. I never knew so well what sin was, as since I came to Aberdeen, although I was preaching of it to you. To feel the smoke of hell's fire in the throat for half an hour, to stand beside a river of fire and brimstone broader than the earth, and to think of being bound hand and foot, and cast into the midst of it quick, and then to have GOD locking the prison-door, never to be opened for all eternity; O how will it shake a conscience that hath any life in it! I find that the fruits of my pains, to have CHRIST and that people united, now meet my soul in my sad hours; and I rejoice that I gave fair warning of all the corruptions now entering into CHRIST's house. I profess to you, I have no rest, I have no ease, until I be over head and ears in love's ocean. If CHRIST's love (that fountain of delight) were laid as open to me as I could wish, O how would I drink, and "drink abundantly!" I half call his absence cruel, and the veil on CHRIST's face a cruel covering, that hideth such a fair face from a sick soul. I dare not challenge himself; but

his absence is a mountain of iron upon my heavy heart. O when shall we meet? O how long is it to the dawning of the marriage-day? O LORD JESUS, take wide steps; O my LORD, come over mountains at one stride! "O my beloved, flee like a roe, or young hart upon the mountains." Since he looked upon me, my heart is not mine own: he hath gone away to heaven with it. I know it was not for nothing, that I spake so much good of CHRIST to you in public. O that the heaven, and the heaven of heavens, were paper, and the sea ink, and the multitude of mountains pens of brass, and I were able to write that paper, within and without, full of the praises of my Well-beloved! Woe is me, I cannot worthily set him out to men and angels. O, there are few tongues to sing his incomparable excellency! What can I, a poor prisoner, do to exalt him? Or what course can I take to extol my LORD JESUS? I am put to my wits' end, how to get his name made great. Blessed be they who would help me in this! Those that see his face, how can they get their eyes plucked from him again? Look up to him, and love him; O love and live! It were life to me, if ye would read this letter to that people, and if they did profit by it. O that I could cause them to die of love for JESUS! I charge them, by the salvation of their souls, to cleave to CHRIST, and follow him, as I taught them. Part by no means with CHRIST; hold fast what ye have received. Keep the truth once delivered: if ye or that people quit it an hair, ye break your conscience in twain; and who then can mend it, and cast a knot on it? My dearest in the LORD, stand fast in CHRIST; keep the faith; contend for CHRIST; wrestle for him; and take men's feuds for God's favour;—there is no comparison betwixt these. O that my LORD would fulfil my joy, and keep the young bride to CHRIST that is at Anwoth! And as to those, whoever they be, that have returned to the old vomit since my departure, I bind upon their back, in my Master's name and authority, the long-lasting, weighty vengeance and curse of God: in my LORD's name, I give them a doom of black, unmixed,

pure wrath, which my Master shall ratify and make good, when we stand together before him, except they repent; and turn to the LORD. And I write to thee, poor mourning and broken-hearted believer, be who thou wilt, of the free salvation; CHRIST's sweet balm for thy wounds, O poor humble believer; CHRIST's blood of atonement for thy guilty soul; CHRIST's heaven for thy poor soul, though once banished out of Paradise: And my Master shall make good my word before long. O that people were wise! O that people would never rest until they find him! O how shall my soul mourn in secret, if my nine years' pained head, and sore breast, and pained back, and grieved heart, and private and public prayers to God, shall all be for nothing among that people! Did my LORD JESUS send me but to summon you before your Judge, and to leave your summons at your houses? O my God, forbid! Often did I tell you of a fan of God's word to come among you, for the contempt of it. I told you often of wrath, wrath from the LORD, to come upon Scotland; it is quickly coming. Now, my dear people, my joy and my crown in the LORD, "let Him be your fear;" seek the LORD and his face, and save your souls. Doves, flee to CHRIST's windows! Pray for me, and praise for me. The blessing of my God, and the prayers and blessing of a poor prisoner, be upon you!

Aberdeen,
June 16, 1637.

Your lawful and loving Pastor,

S. R.



TO MR. WILLIAM DALGLIESH,

Minister of the Gospel.

Reverend and dear Brother,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you! I am well; my LORD JESUS is kinder to me than ever he was; it pleaseth him to dine and sup with his afflicted prisoner; a King

feasteth me, and his spikenard casteth a sweet smell. Put CHRIST'S love to the trial, and then it will appear love indeed : we employ not his love, and therefore we know it not. I count more of the sufferings of my LORD, than of this world's gilded glory. I find it a sweet and rich thing to exchange my sorrows with CHRIST'S joys, my afflictions for that sweet peace which I have with himself. Brother, this is his own truth for which I now suffer. He hath sealed my sufferings with his own comforts, and I know he will not put his seal upon blank paper ; his seals are not dumb, nor delusive, to confirm imaginations and lies. Go on, my dear Brother, in the strength of the LORD, not fearing man that is a worm, or the son of man that will die. Providence hath a thousand keys, to open a thousand different doors, for the deliverance of his own, when it is even come to a "*Conclamatum est.*" Let us be faithful, and care for our own part, which is to do and suffer for him ; and lay CHRIST'S part on himself, and leave it there. Duties are ours, events are the LORD'S. When our faith goeth to meddle with events, and to hold a Court (if I may so speak) upon God's Providence, and beginneth to say, "How wilt thou do this and that?"—we lose ground. We have nothing to do there ; it is our part to let the Almighty exercise his own office, and steer his own helm ; there is nothing left for us, but to see how we may be approved of him, and how we may roll the weight of our weak souls (in well-doing) upon him, who is GOD OMNIPOTENT : And when what we thus essay miscarrieth, it shall neither be our sin nor cross. Brother, remember the LORD'S word to PETER, "SIMON, lovest thou me? Feed my sheep:" No greater testimony of our love to CHRIST can be, than to feed painfully and faithfully his lambs. Grace be with you!

Your brother in bonds,

S. R.

Aberdeen.

TO EARLESTOUN, YOUNGER.

Much honoured and well-beloved in the LORD,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you! There is not such a glassy, icy, and slippery piece of way, betwixt you and heaven, as youth. I have experience to say with me here, and seal what I assert; the old ashes of the sins of my youth are now fire of sorrow to me. I have seen the Devil, as it were, dead and buried, and yet rise again, and be a worse devil than ever he was. Therefore, my Brother, beware of a green young devil, that hath never been buried: the devil in his youth is much to be feared. Better yoke with an old grey-haired, withered, dry devil: for in youth he findeth dry sticks, and dry coals, and a hot hearth-stone; and how soon can he with his flint cast fire, and with his bellows blow it up, and fire the house? Sanctified thoughts, thoughts made conscience of, and kept in awe, are green fuel that burn not, and are a water for SATAN'S coal. Yet, I must tell you, that all the saints, now triumphant in heaven, are nothing but a company of redeemed sinners. But their redemption is not only past the seals, but completed; and yours is on the wheels, and in doing. Let your bleeding soul, and your sores, be put into the hands of CHRIST: let young and strong corruptions, and his free grace, be yoked together; and let CHRIST and your sins deal it betwixt them. I would be loth to remove your fears, and your sense of deadness; (I wish it were more;) there are some wounds of such a nature, that their bleeding should not be soon stopped. Ye must take a house beside the Physician; it shall be a miracle, if you be the first sick man he puts away uncured. Nay, nay, CHRIST is honest and free with sinners; (*John vi. 37;*) "And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." Take ye that; it cannot be presumption to take that as your own, when ye find your wounds. Presumption is ever whole at the heart, and groaneth only for the sake of fashion; faith hath sense of sickness. CHRIST is as full a

feast as ye can have. His mercy sends always a letter of defiance to all your sins, if there were ten thousand more of them. I grant you, it is a hard matter for a poor hungry man to find CHRIST, when the key of his banqueting-house is sought, and cannot be had: but hunger must break through iron-locks. I bemoan them not, who can cry out for a SAVIOUR: ye must let him hear it (to say so) upon both sides of his head, when he hideth himself; it is not time then to be careless and patient. CHRIST is rare indeed, and delicate to a sinner; he is a miracle, to a seeking and weeping sinner; but yet such a miracle as will be seen by them who will "come and see." The seeker and sigher is at last a singer and enjoyer; nay, I have seen a dumb man get an alms from CHRIST. It bodeth the approach of God's mercy, when we complain heartily for sin. Let wrestling be continued with CHRIST, till he say, "How is it that I cannot be quit of your cries?" And then hope for CHRIST's blessing; his blessing is better than ten other blessings. Think not shame because of your guiltiness. Necessity must not blush to beg: it standeth you hard to want CHRIST; and that which idle waiting cannot do, crying and knocking will do. Now, for myself; alas, I am not the man I go for in this nation: men have not just weights to weigh me in. O, I am a silly body, and overgrown with weeds! Corruption is too rank in me. O that I were answerable to this holy cause, and to that honourable Prince's love, for whom I now suffer! If CHRIST would refer the matter to me, (in his presence I speak it,) I might think it shame to vote my own salvation. I think, CHRIST might say, "Thinkest thou not shame to claim heaven, who dost so little for it?" I am very often so, that I know not whether I sink or swim in the water; I find myself a bag of light froth; I could bear no weight (if my LORD did not cast in borrowed weight, even CHRIST's righteousness, to weigh for me.) The stock I have is not mine own; I am but the merchant that trafficks with other people's goods. "If my creditor, CHRIST, would take from me what he hath lent,

could not long keep the causeway; but CHRIST hath made it mine and his. I complain, that when CHRIST cometh, he cometh always to fetch fire; he is ever in haste, he may not tarry: but I think it my happiness to love the love of CHRIST; and, when he goeth away, the memory of his sweet presence is like a feast in a dear summer. O that I could write a book of his praises! O fairest among the sons of men, why stayest thou so long away? O heavens, move fast! O time, run, run, and hasten the marriage-day! For love is tormented with delays. O Angels, O Seraphim, who stand before him, O blessed Spirits who now see his face, set him on high; for when ye have worn your harps with his praises, all is too little, and is nothing, to cast the smell of the praise of that fair flower, that fragrant rose of Sharon, through many worlds! Grace be with you!

Aberdeen,
June 16, 1637.

Yours in JESUS,

S. R.



TO ALEXANDER GORDON, OF KNOCKGRAY.

Dearest and truly honoured Brother,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you! I have seen no letter from you since I came to Aberdeen; I will not interpret it to be forgetfulness. I am here in a fair prison; CHRIST is my sweet and honourable fellow-prisoner, and I his sad and joyful lord-prisoner, if I may speak so. I think this cross becometh me well, and is suitable to me, in respect of my duty to suffer for CHRIST, although not in regard of my deserving to be thus honoured. However it be, I see CHRIST is strong, even lying in the dust, in prison, and in banishment. Losses and disgraces are the wheels of his triumphing chariot. In the sufferings of his saints, as he intendeth their good, so he intendeth his own glory; and CHRIST shooteth not at random, he hitteth what he purposeth to hit: therefore he doth make

his own weak nothings, who are the contempt of men, "a new sharp threshing instrument, having teeth, to thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and to make the hills as chaff, and to fan them!" (*Isa. xli. 15, 16.*) What harder stuff, or harder grain for threshing out, than high and rocky mountains? But the saints are God's threshing instruments to beat them all into chaff. Let fools laugh the fools' laughter, and scorn CHRIST, and bid the weeping captives in Babylon "sing one of the songs of Zion;" no created powers in hell, or out of hell, can mar our LORD JESUS's music, nor spoil our song of joy. Let us then be glad and rejoice in the salvation of our LORD; for faith had never yet cause to have wet cheeks, or to droop and die. What can ail faith, seeing CHRIST suffereth himself (with reverence to Him be it spoken) to be commanded by it, and CHRIST commandeth all things? Faith may dance, because CHRIST sings; and we may come in the choir, and lift our hoarse and rough voices, and sing, and shout for joy with our LORD JESUS. If God were dead, (if I may speak so, with reverence of Him who liveth for ever and ever,) and CHRIST buried, and laid among the worms, we might have cause to look like dead folks. But, "the LORD liveth, and blessed be the rock of our salvation." (*Psal. xviii. 46.*) None have right to joy but we; for joy is sown for us, and an ill summer or harvest will not spoil the crop. I cannot but speak what I have felt; my LORD JESUS hath broken a box of spikenard upon the head of his poor prisoner, and it is a pain to smother CHRIST's love; it will be out, whether we will or not. If we did but speak according to the matter, a cross for CHRIST should have another name; yea, a cross, especially when he cometh with his arms full of joys, is the happiest hard tree that ever was laid upon my weak shoulder. CHRIST and his cross together are sweet company, and a blessed couple. My prison is my palace; my sorrow is pregnant with joy; my losses are rich losses; my pain is easy pain; my heavy days are holy and happy days. I may tell a new tale of CHRIST to my

ends. O that I could make a song of him, and could commend CHRIST, and tune his praises aright! Is it not great art in my LORD, that he can bring forth such fair apples out of this crabbed tree of the cross? Grace be with you!

Aberdeen,
June 16, 1637.

Yours in his LORD JESUS,

S. R.



TO ELIZABETH KENNEDY.

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be unto you! I have long had a purpose of writing to you. I heartily desire that ye would mind your country; for all come not home at night, who suppose they have set their face heavenward. It is a woeful thing, to die and miss of heaven! I persuade myself, that thousands shall be deceived and ashamed of their hope; because they cast their anchor in the sinking sands. Till now, I knew not the pain, labour, or difficulty that there is to win home; nor did I understand so well, before this, "The righteous" shall "scarcely be saved." Oh how many a poor professor's candle is blown out, and never lighted again! I see that to be ranked amongst the children of God, and to have a name among men, is now thought good enough to carry professors to heaven: but certainly, a name is but a name, and will never abide the blast of God's storm. I counsel you, not to give your soul or CHRIST rest, nor your eyes sleep, till ye have gotten something that will abide the fire, and stand out the storm. I am sure, that even if my one foot were in heaven, and he should then say, "Fend thyself, I will hold thee no longer,"—I should go no further, but presently fall down in as many pieces of dead nature. They are happy for evermore, who are swallowed up in the love of CHRIST, and know no sickness but that of desire after CHRIST. We run our souls out of breath, and tire them, in coursing and galloping after our own dreams, to get

some created good thing on this side of death. We would fain stay, and spin out a heaven to ourselves, on this side of the water; but sorrow, want, changes, crosses, and sin, are both woof and warp in that ill-spun web. O how sweet and dear are those thoughts, that are still upon "the things which are above!" And how happy are they, who are longing to have time's thread cut, and can cry to CHRIST, "LORD JESUS, come over, come and fetch the dried passenger!" I wish our thoughts were more frequently than they are upon our country. Heaven casteth a sweet odour afar off, to those that have spiritual senses! God hath made many fair flowers; but the fairest of them all is heaven; and the flower of all flowers is CHRIST. O why do we not flee up to that lovely one? Alas! that there is such scarcity of love, and lovers of CHRIST, among us all! Fie, fie, upon us, who love fair things, as fair gold, fair houses, fair lands, fair pleasures, fair honours, and fair persons; and do not pine and melt away with love to CHRIST. O, would to God that I had more love for his sake! O for as much love as would lie betwixt me and heaven! O for as much love as would go round about the earth, and over the heaven, yea, the heaven of heavens, and ten thousand worlds, that I might fix it all upon CHRIST!" But, alas! I have nothing for Him; yet he hath much for me: it is no gain to CHRIST, that he getteth my little span-length and hand-breadth of love. If men would have something to do with their hearts and their thoughts, which are always rolling up and down after sinful vanities, they may find great and sweet employment for their thoughts in CHRIST. If these frothy and restless hearts of ours would come all about CHRIST, and look into his love, his bottomless love, into the depth of his mercy, into the unsearchable riches of his grace, so as to search into the beauty of God in CHRIST; they would be swallowed up in the "depth and height, the length and breadth," of his goodness. O if men would draw the curtains, and look into the inner side of the ark, and behold how the "fulness of the" Godhead dwelleth

him bodily," who would not say, "Let me die, let me die ten times, to get a sight of him!" Ten thousand deaths were no great price to give for him. I am sure that ardent love would heighten the market, and raise the price to the double for him. But, alas, if men and angels were sold at the dearest, they would not all buy a sight of CHRIST. O how happy are they, who get CHRIST for nothing! GOD send me no more for my part of paradise, but CHRIST; and surely I were rich enough, and as well *heavened* as the best of them, if CHRIST were my heaven. I can write no better thing to you, than to desire you to weigh him again and again; and, after this, have no other to gain your love, but CHRIST: he will be found worthy of all your love; although it should swell from the earth to the uppermost circle of the heaven of heavens. To our LORD JESUS and his love I commend you.

Yours in JESUS,

Aberdeen, 1637.

S. R.



TO JONET KENNEDY.

Loving and dear Sister,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be unto you! I received your letter. Keep your taste, your love, and your hope in heaven; it is not good that your love and your LORD should be in two sundry countries. Up, up after Him; that ye and he may be together. A King from heaven hath sent for you; by faith he showed you the New Jerusalem, and taketh you along in the SPIRIT, through all the dwelling-houses in heaven, and saith, "All these are thine: this palace is for thee and CHRIST." If ye only had been the chosen of GOD, CHRIST would have built that house for you and himself: now, it is for you and many others also. Take with you in your journey, what ye may carry with you, your conscience, faith, hope, patience, meekness, goodness, brotherly-kindness; for such wares as these are

of great price in the country whither ye go. As for other things, the world's vanity and trash, since they are but the house-sweepings, ye shall do best not to carry them with you; ye found them here,—leave them here, and let them keep the house. Your sun is low; be nigh your lodging against night. We go, one by one, out of this great market, till the town be empty, and the two lodgings, heaven and hell, be filled. Antichrist and his master are busy to replenish hell, and to seduce many: and stars, great church-lights, are falling from heaven; and many are misled and seduced, and sell their birth-right, by hunting for I know not what. Fasten upon CHRIST. Though my cross were as heavy as ten mountains, when he putteth his shoulder under me and it, it is but a feather. I please myself in the choice of CHRIST; I rejoice that he is in heaven before me; GOD send a joyful meeting, and in the mean time the traveller's charges for the way, I mean a burden of CHRIST's love, to sweeten the journey, and to encourage a breathless runner; for when I lose breath in climbing up the mountain, he maketh new breath. Now, the very GOD of peace establish you to the day of his appearance!

•Aberdeen,
Sept. 9, 1637.

• Yours in his only LORD JESUS,

S. R.



TO MR. WILLIAM DALGLIESH.

Reverend and well-beloved Brother,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be unto you! I have heard somewhat of your trials in Galloway. Let me entreat you to be steadfast to CHRIST. My witness is above, that you have added much joy to me in my bonds, when I hear that you grow in the grace of GOD, and zeal for your Master. Our ministry, whether by preaching or suffering, will cast an odour through the world both of heaven and hell. (2 Cor. ii. 15, 16.) There is nothing out of heaven,

next to **CHRIST**, dearer to me than my ministry; and the worth of it, in my estimation, is swelled, and paineth me exceedingly: yet I am content, for the honour of my **LORD**, to surrender it back again to the Lord of the vineyard; let him do, both with me and it, what he thinketh good. I think myself too little for him. And let me speak to you, how kind a fellow-prisoner is **CHRIST** to me! Believe me, this kind of cross, (which would not go by my door, but would needs visit me,) the longer it lasts is still the more welcome to me. It is true, my silent sabbaths have been and are still glassy ice, whereon my faith can scarcely hold its feet, and I am often blown off my feet with a storm of doubting; yet truly my bonds all this time emit a mighty fragrance of high and deep love in **CHRIST**. I cannot indeed see through my cross to the far end: yet I am praising the **LAMB**, in sorrow, deprivation, losses, want of friends, and death. Let us be glad that we have blood, losses, and wounds, to show to our Master and Captain at his appearance. Woe is me, my dear brother, that I say often. "I am but dry bones, which my **LORD** wil. not bring out of the grave again;" and that my faithless fears say, "O I am a dry tree, that can bear no fruit; I am a useless body, who can beget no children to the **LORD** in his house." Yet I often get the advantage of the hill above my temptations; and then I despise temptations, and even hell itself, and am proud of my honourable Master: I resolve, whether contrary winds will or not, to fetch **CHRIST**'s harbour; and I think a resolute and earnest contention with my **LORD JESUS** for his love very lawful. Since my entry hither, many a time hath my fair sun shone without a cloud: hot and burning hath **CHRIST**'s love been to me; I have no vent for the expression of it. Except **CHRIST** would seize upon myself, and make the readiest payment that can be of my heart and love to himself, I have no other thing to give him. If my sufferings could do beholders good, and proclaim the incomparable worth of **CHRIST**'s love to the world, then would my soul be overjoyed, and my sad

heart cheered and calmed! Dear brother, I cannot tell what is become of my labours among that people. If all that my LORD builded by me be cast down, and none stand by CHRIST, whose love I once preached as clearly and plainly as I could to that people; (though far below its worth and excellency;) if so, how can I bear it? And if another make a foul harvest, where I have made a painful and honest sowing, it will not soon digest with me; but I know his ways are past finding out. Yet my witness both within me and above me knoweth, and my pained breast upon the LORD's day at night, that my desire to have made CHRIST awful, and amiable, and sweet to that people, is now my joy; and it was my desire and aim to make CHRIST and them one. O my GOD, seek not an account of the violence done to me by my brethren, whose salvation I love and desire! I pray, that they and I be not heard as contrary parties, in the day of our compearance before our Judge. O how silly an advantage is my deprivation to men, seeing that my LORD JESUS hath many ways to recover his own losses, so that his lily may grow among thorns, and his little kingdom exalt itself, even under the sword and spears of contrary powers! My dear brother, go on in the strength of his rich grace: stand fast for CHRIST; deliver the Gospel with a clean and undefiled conscience. Nothing, nothing (I say, nothing) but sound sanctification can abide the LORD's fan. I recommend you, and GOD's people committed by CHRIST to your trust, to the rich grace of our all-sufficient LORD. Remember my bonds: praise my LORD, who beareth me up in my sufferings. As you find occasion (according to the wisdom given you) show our acquaintance what the LORD hath done to my soul. This I seek not, verily, to hunt my own praise, but that my Master may be magnified in my sufferings.

Aberdeen,
June 17, 1637.

Your Brother in JESUS,
S. R.

TO THE LADY LARGIRIE.

MADAM,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you ! I exhort you in the LORD, to go on in your journey to heaven, and to be content with such fare by the way as CHRIST and his followers have had before you : for they had always the wind on their faces ; and our LORD hath not changed the way to us for our ease, but will have us follow our guide. Alas, how doth sin clog us in our journey ! What fools are we, to have any other love beside CHRIST ? It were best for us to seek our own home, and to sell our hopes of this little idol of the earth, where we are neither well summered nor well wintered. O that our souls would think of it, as a traveller doth of a drink of water, which is not any part of his treasure, but goeth away with the using ; for ten miles' journey maketh that drink to him as nothing ! O that we had as soon done with this world, and could as quickly despatch the love of it ! But as a child cannot hold two apples in his little hand, but the one putteth the other out of its room ; so neither can we be masters of two loves. Blessed were we, if we could make ourselves masters of that invaluable treasure, the love of CHRIST ; or rather suffer ourselves to be mastered to CHRIST's love, so that CHRIST were our all things, and all other things our nothings. O let us be ready for shipping, against the time when our LORD's wind and tide call for us ! Death is the last thief that shall come without din or noise of feet, and take our souls away, and we shall take our leave of time, and face eternity : and our LORD shall lay together the two sides of this earthly tabernacle, and fold us, and lay us by, as a man layeth by clothes at night ; and put the one half of us in a house of clay, the dark grave, and the other half of us in heaven or hell. Seek to be found of your LORD in peace, and put your soul in order ; for CHRIST will not give a nail-breadth of time to our little sand-glass. Pray for Zion ; and for me

his prisoner, that he would be pleased to bring me amongst you again, full of CHRIST, laden with the blessing of his gospel. Grace, grace be with you!

Yours in his only Lord and Master,

Aberdeen, 1637.

S. R.



TO EARLSTOUN, YOUNGER.

Worthy and dearly-beloved in the LORD,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you! I long to hear from you: I remain still a prisoner of hope, and think it service to the LORD, to wait on still with submission, till the LORD's morning-sky break, and his summer-day dawn. GOD sent us down to this earth, among devils and men, the firebrands of the Devil, and temptations, that we might suffer for a time; otherwise he might have made heaven wait on us at our coming out of the womb, and have carried us home to our country, without letting us set down our feet in this thorny life. But seeing that a piece of suffering is carved for every one of us, less or more, as infinite wisdom hath thought good, our part is to harden and habituate our soft and thin-skinned nature to endure fire and water, devils, lions, men, losses, and sad hearts, like persons whose behaviour is inspected by GOD, angels, men, and devils. O what folly is it, to sit down and weep upon a decree of GOD, that is as unmoveable as GOD who made it! For who can come behind our LORD, to alter or better what he hath decreed and done? It were better to make windows in our prison, and to look out to GOD, and to our country-heaven, and to cry, like fettered men who long for the King's free air, "LORD, let thy kingdom come! O let the Bridegroom come! O fair day, O everlasting summer-day, dawn and shine out, break out from under the black sky!" If every day a little stone in the prison-walls were broken, and thereby assurance given to the chained prisoner, lying under twenty stone of irons

son arms and legs, that at length his chain should wear into two pieces, and a hole should be made, so wide that he might come safely out to his long-desired liberty; he would in patience wait on. The LORD's prisoners are in that case: years and months will take out now one little stone, then another, of this house of clay, and at length time shall win out the breadth of a fair door, and send out the imprisoned soul to the free air in heaven. O that we could breathe out new hope, and new submission, every day! For certainly a weight of glory (yea, a far more exceeding and eternal weight) shall recompense, both in weight and length, our light and short-dated crosses. Our waters are but ebb, and come neither to our chin, nor to the stopping of our breath. I may see (if I would borrow eyes from CHRIST) dry land, and that near: why then should we not laugh at adversity? I rejoice in the hope of that glory to be revealed, for it is no uncertain glory we look for: our hope is not hung upon an untwisted thread; but our anchor of salvation is fastened with GOD's own hand, and with CHRIST's own strength. O that our faith could ride it out against the high and proud winds and waves, when our sea seemeth all to be on fire! O how oft do I let my grasp go! I am put to swimming and half-sinking. I find the Devil hath the advantage of the ground in our corrupt nature: alas! that is a friend near of kin to himself, and will not fail to fall foul upon us. But the less of our weight is upon our feeble legs, and the more on CHRIST the strong rock, the better for us. It is our heaven to lay many weights and burdens upon CHRIST, and to make him the root and top, the beginning and ending, of our salvation: LORD, hold us here! Now to this Tutor, and rich LORD, I recommend you: hold fast till he come. Grace, grace be with you!

Yours in his and your LORD JESUS,

Aberdeen, 1637.

S. R.

TO JOHN GORDON, OF CARDONESS, YOUNGER.

Dearly beloved in our LORD,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you! I long exceedingly to hear the case of your soul, which hath a large share both of my prayers and careful thoughts. Remember that a precious treasure and prize depends upon this short play that ye are now upon; eternity standeth upon the little point of your well or ill employed, short, and swift-posting sand-glass. Seek the LORD while he may be found; the LORD waiteth upon you. Your soul is of no little price; gold or silver, of as much bounds as would cover the highest heavens round about, cannot buy it. To live as others do, and to be free from open sins, will not bring you to heaven: as much civility and discretion as would lie between you and heaven will not lead you one inch above nature; and therefore take pains for salvation, and give your will, wit, humour, desires, and pleasures to CHRIST. It is not possible for you to know, till experience teach you, how dangerous a time youth is: it is like green and wet timber; when CHRIST casteth fire upon it, it taketh not fire. There is need here of more than ordinary pains; for corrupt nature hath a good friend in youth. Sinning against light will put out your candle, and stupify your conscience; and, when that is done, the Devil is like a mad horse, that hath broken the bridle, and runneth away with his rider whither he listeth. Learn to know that which the Apostle knew,—the deceitfulness of sin. Strive to make prayer, and reading, and holy company, and holy conference, your delight: when delight cometh in, ye shall smell the sweetness of CHRIST, till at length your soul be swallowed up in CHRIST's sweetness: then shall ye be taken up to the top of the mountain with the LORD, to know the ravishments of spiritual love, and the glory and excellency of a seen, revealed, felt, and embraced CHRIST; and then ye need never to loose yourself from CHRIST, and bind your soul to old lovers: then,

id never till then, are all the paces, motions, and wheels
your soul in a right tune. But if this world, and the
lusts thereof, be your delight, ye cannot be a vessel of
glory. As the LORD liveth, thousands, thousands are
beguiled with security, because GOD, and wrath, and
judgment, are not terrible to them. Stand in awe of GOD,
and of the warnings of conscience. Make others to see
CHRIST in you, moving, doing, speaking, and thinking;
your actions will smell of him, if he be in you. There is
an instinct in the new-born babes of CHRIST, like the
instinct of nature that leads birds to build their nests, and
bring up their young, and love such and such places, as
woods, forests, and wildernesses, better than other places.
The instinct of nature maketh a man love his mother-country
above all countries: the instinct of renewed nature will
lead you to such and such works, as to love your country
above, and sigh to be clothed with your house not made
with hands. Sleep not soundly, till you find yourself in
that case, that ye dare look death in the face, and hazard
your soul upon eternity. I am sure, many ells of the short
thread of your life are by hand, since I saw you; and that
thread hath an end, and ye have no hands to add one day,
or a finger-breadth, to the end of it. When hearing, and
seeing, and the outward walls of the clay-house, shall fall
down, and life shall surrender the besieged castle of clay
to death and judgment, and ye find your time run out,
what thoughts will ye then have of idol-pleasures? What
would ye then give for the LORD's favour? And what a
price would ye then give for his pardon? O dear Sir, for
the LORD's sake, awake to live righteously, and love your
poor soul, and, after ye have seen this my letter, say with
yourself, "The LORD will seek an account of this warning
I have received." Lodge CHRIST in your family. I bless
your children. Grace be with you!

Your lawful and loving Pastor,

Aberdeen, 1637.

S. R.

TO MY LORD BOYD.

My very honourable and good Lord ;

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to your Lordship ! Join, join (as ye do) with CHRIST ; he is worth more to you and your posterity, than this world's May-flowers, its withering riches and honour, that shall go away as smoke, and shall in one half hour, after the blast of the Archangel's trumpet, lie in white ashes. Let me beseech your Lordship to draw aside the lap of time's curtain, and look in through that window to great and endless eternity, and consider, if a worldly price (supposing that this little round clay-globe, the dying idol of the fools of this world, were all your own) can be given for one smile of CHRIST's countenance, in that day, when so many joints and knees of thousand thousands shall stand before CHRIST, trembling, and making their prayers to hills and mountains to "fall upon them, and hide them from the face of the LAMB." O how many would sell lordships and kingdoms on that day, to buy CHRIST ! But, oh ! the market shall be closed and ended ere then. Your Lordship hath now a blessed venture of winning "the Prince of the Kings of the earth." Fear not worms of clay, the moth shall eat them as a garment ; let the LORD be your fear ; he is with you, and shall fight for you. Thus shall ye cause "the blessing of those who are ready to perish to come upon you." The LAMB and his armies are with you, and the kingdoms of the earth are the LORD's. I am persuaded, there is not another Gospel than that which ye now contend for. I dare hazard my heaven and salvation upon it, that this is the only saving way to glory. Grace, grace be with your Lordship !

Your Lordship's, at all obedience in CHRIST,

Aberdeen, 1637.

S. R.

TO ROBERT GORDON, BAILLIE OF AIR.

WORTHY SIR,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you! I long to hear from you. I know that submissive waiting for the LORD shall at length ripen the joy and deliverance of his own. What is the dry and miscarrying hope of all them who are not in CHRIST, but confusion and wind? O how miserably are the children of this world beguiled, whose wine cometh home to them water, and their gold brass! And what wonder is it, that hopes builded upon sand should fall? It were good for us all to abandon the forlorn and blasted hope which we have had in the creature; and let us henceforth come and "drink water out of our own well," even "the fountain of living waters," and build ourselves and our hope upon CHRIST our Rock. Alas, that natural love to this borrowed home, in which we were born, should have the largest share of our heart! Our poor, lean, and empty dreams of confidence in something besides GOD, travel no further than up and down the creatures. GOD may say of us, (*Amos vi. 13.*) "Ye rejoice in a thing of nought." Surely we spin our spider's web with pain; and build our rotten tottering house upon a lie, and falsehood, and vanity. O when shall we learn to have thoughts higher than the sun and moon; and teach our joy, hope, confidence, and our soul's desires, to look up to our best country, and to look down on the clay tents, set up for a night's lodging or two in this uncouth land, and laugh at our childish conceptions and imaginations, that would suck joy out of creatures! It were our happiness for evermore, if GOD would cast a pest, a leprosy, upon our part of this fair world, so that clay might no longer deceive us! O that GOD may burn and blast our hope here, rather than our hope should live to burn us! Alas, the wrong side of CHRIST, his suffering side, his wounds, his wants, his wrongs, the oppressions of men done to him, are turned towards men's eyes; and they see not the best

and fairest side of CHRIST, his amiable face and his beauty, which men and angels wonder at. Sir, lend your thoughts to these things, and learn to condemn this world. See him who is invisible ; draw aside the curtain ; and look in to a kingdom “ undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved for you in heaven : ” this is worthy of your pains, and worthy of your soul’s sweating, and labouring, and seeking after, by night and by day. Fire will fly over the earth, and all that is in it, even destruction from the ALMIGHTY. Fie, fie upon that hope, that shall be dried up by the root ! Fie upon the drunken night-bargains, and the drunken and mad covenants, that sinners make with death and hell ! When men’s souls are mad and drunken with the love of this life, they think to make a nest for their hopes, and take quarters of hell and death, that they shall have ease, long life, and peace ; and in the morning, when the last trumpet shall awake them, then they rue the day. It is time, high time for you, to think upon death and your accounts, and to remember where ye will be before the year of our LORD 1700. I hope ye are thinking upon this. Pull at your soul, and draw it aside from the company that it is with, and whisper into it news of eternity, death, judgment, heaven, and hell. Grace, grace be with you !

Yours in his LORD JESUS,

Aberdeen, 1637.

S. R.



TO CARDONESS, ELDER.

MUCH HONOURED SIR,

I LONG to hear how your soul prospereth. I wonder that ye write not to me ; for the HOLY GHOST beareth me witness, that I cannot, I dare not forget you, nor the souls of those with you, who are redeemed by the blood of the great Shepherd. Ye are in my heart in the night-watches ; ye are my joy and crown in the day of CHRIST. O LORD, bear witness, if my soul thirsteth for any thing out of

aven, more than your salvation : let GOD lay me in an even balance, and try me in this. Love heaven ; let your heart be on it. Up, up, and visit the new land, and view the fair city, and the white throne, and the LAMB sitting on it. It were time that your soul should cast itself and your burdens upon CHRIST. I beseech you, by the wounds of your REDEEMER, and by your compearance before him, and by the salvation of your soul, lose no more time ; run fast, for it is late. GOD hath sworn by himself, who made the world and time, “ that time shall be no more.” (*Rev. x.*) Ye are now upon the very border of the other life. Your LORD cannot be blamed for not giving you warning : I have taught the truth of CHRIST to you, and delivered unto you the whole counsel of GOD ; and I have stood before the LORD for you, and I shall yet still stand. Awake, awake to do righteously. Think not to be eased of the debts that are on your house, by oppressing any, or being rigorous to those that are under you : remember how I endeavoured to walk before you in this matter, as an example. “ Behold here am I, witness against me, before the LORD and his Anointed, whose ox or whose ass have I taken ? Whom have I defrauded ? Whom have I oppressed ? ” Who knoweth how my soul feedeth upon a good conscience, when I remember how I spent this body in feeding the lambs of CHRIST ! At my first entry hither, I took it ill of my LORD, because he had cast me over the dike of the vineyard as a dry tree, and would have no more of my service ; my dumb Sabbaths broke my heart, and I would not be comforted : but now “ he whom my soul loveth ” is come again, and it pleaseth him to feast me with his love ; a King dineth with me, “ and his spikenard casteth a sweet smell.” The LORD above is my witness, that I write my heart to you ; I never knew, by my nine years’ preaching, so much of CHRIST’s love, as he hath taught me in Aberdeen, by six months’ imprisonment. I charge you, in CHRIST’s name, help me to praise, and show that people the loving kindness of the LORD to my soul ; that so my sufferings may in some way preach to them,

when I am silent. He hath made me know now, better than before, what it is to be crucified to the world : I would not now give a drink of cold water for all the world's kindness ; I owe no service to it. I would not exchange my sighs with the laughing of adversaries. The LORD hath given you much, and therefore he will require much of you again. Number your talents, and see what ye have to render back ; ye cannot be enough persuaded of the shortness of your time. I charge you to write to me, and in the fear of God be plain with me, whether or not ye have made your salvation sure : I am confident, and hope the best ; but I know, your reckonings with your Judge are many and deep. Sir, be not beguiled, neglect not your " one thing," your " one necessary thing," " the good part that shall not be taken from you." Look beyond time ; things here are but moon-shine ; they have but children's wit, who are delighted with shadows, and deluded with feathers flying in the air. Desire your children, in the morning of their life, to begin and seek the LORD ; to " remember their Creator in the days of their youth ;" (*Eccles.* xii. 1 ;) and to " cleanse their way, by taking heed thereto according to God's word." (*Psa.* cxix. 9.) Youth is a glassy age ; Satan finds a swept chamber (for the most part) in youth, and a garnished lodging for himself and his train. Let the LORD have the flower of their age ; the best sacrifice is due to him. Instruct them in this, that they have a soul, and that this life is nothing in comparison of eternity : they will have much need of God's conduct in this world, to guide them amongst those rocks upon which most men split ; but far more need, when it cometh to the hour of death, and their compearance before CHRIST. O that there were such a heart in them, to fear the name of the great and dreadful God, who hath laid up great things for those that love and fear him ! I pray that God may be their portion. Show others of my parishioners, that I wrote to them my best wishes, and the blessings of their lawful Pastor ; say to them from me, that I beseech them, by the bowels of CHRIST, to keep in mind the doctrine of

our LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, which I taught them ; that so they may lay hold on eternal life, striving together for the faith of the Gospel, and making sure salvation to themselves. Walk in love, and do righteousness ; seek peace, love one another, and wait for the coming of our Master and Judge. Receive no doctrine contrary to that which I delivered to you ; if ye fall away, and forget it, and so forsake your own mercy, the LORD be judge betwixt you and me. I take heaven and earth to witness, that such shall eternally perish ; but, if they serve the LORD, great will be their reward when they and I stand before our Judge. Set forward up the mountain, to meet with GOD ; climb up, for your Saviour calleth on you. It may be, that GOD will call you to your rest when I am far from you ; but ye have my love, and the desires of my heart for your soul's welfare. He that is holy, keep you from falling, and establish you till his own glorious appearance !

Your affectionate and lawful Pastor,

Aberdeen, 1637.

S. R.



TO ROBERT STEWART.

MY VERY DEAR BROTHER,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you ! Ye are heartily welcome to my Master's house ; GOD give you much joy of your new Master. If I have been in the house before you, I were not faithful to give the house an ill name, or to speak evil of the Lord of the family. I rather wish GOD's HOLY SPIRIT (O LORD, breathe upon me with that SPIRIT!) to tell you the fashions of the house. One-thing I can say,—by waiting ye will grow a great man with the Lord of the house. Hang on, till ye get some good from CHRIST ; lay all your loads by faith upon CHRIST ; ease yourself, and let him bear all : He can, he will bear you, although hell were upon your back. I rejoice that he is come, and hath chosen you in the furnace. Ye have gotten

a great advantage in the way to heaven, that ye have started in the morning : like a fool as I was, I suffered my sun to be high in the heaven, before ever I took the way. I pray ye now, keep the advantage ye have. Be not lazy ; and be careful to take heed to your feet, in that slippery and dangerous way of youth. The Devil and temptations now have the advantage of you ; dry timber will soon take fire. Be covetous and greedy of the grace of God, and beware that it be not that kind of holiness that cometh only from the cross ; for too many are disposed like those described in *Psa.* lxxviii. 34—36, “ When he slew them, then they sought him, and they returned and inquired early after God. Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues.” It is hypocrisy, to give God fair words, when he hath us in his gripe, (if I may so speak,) and to flatter him till we win the fair fields again. Try well green godliness, and examine what it is ye love in CHRIST. If ye love but CHRIST’s sun-shine, and would have only summer-weather to heaven, your profession will play you a slip, and the winter-well will grow dry again in summer. Make no sport of CHRIST ; but labour for a sound and lively sight of sin, that ye may judge yourself an undone man, a damned slave of hell and sin, one dying in your blood, except CHRIST come and take you up : and therefore make sure and fast work of conversion ; cast the earth deep ; down, down with the old work, the building of confusion, that was there before ; and let CHRIST lay new work, and make a new creation within you. Look if CHRIST’s rain goeth down to the root of your withered plants ; and if his love wound your heart, while it bleeds with sorrow for sin ; and if it can pant, and be like to die, for that lovely one, JESUS. I know, CHRIST will not be hid where he is ; grace will ever speak for itself, and be fruitful in well-doing. The sanctified cross is a fruitful tree, it bringeth forth many apples. If I should tell you, by some weak experience, what I have found in CHRIST, ye or others could hardly believe me. I thought not the

hundredth part of CHRIST long since, that I do now; though, alas! my thoughts are still infinitely below his worth. I would refuse no conditions, not hell excepted, (reserving always God's hatred,) to buy possession of JESUS: but, alas! I am not a merchant, who have any money to give for him; I must either come to a cheap market, where wares are had for nothing, or else I go home empty. But I have cast this work upon CHRIST, to get me himself; I have his faith, and truth, and promise, (as a pawn of his,) all engaged that I shall obtain that which my hungry desires would be at; and I esteem that the choice of my happiness. And as for CHRIST's cross, especially the flower of all crosses, "to suffer for his name," I esteem it more than I can speak; and I write it under mine own hand to you,—it is one of the steps of the ladder up to our country, and CHRIST is still at the heavy end of this black tree, and so it is but as a feather to me. I need not run at leisure, because of the burden on my back; my back never bare the like of it: the more heavily crossed for CHRIST the soul is, it is still the lighter for the journey. Now, would to GOD that all cold-blooded, faint-hearted soldiers of CHRIST would look again to JESUS, and to his love; and when they look, I would have them to look again and again, and fill themselves with beholding CHRIST's beauty; and I dare say then, that CHRIST would come into great request with many; they would take hold of him, and not let him go. But, when I have spoken of him till my head ached, I have said just nothing; and I may begin again. A Godhead, a Godhead is a world's wonder! Set ten thousand new-made worlds of angels and men, and double them in number ten thousand thousand thousand times; let their hearts and tongues be ten thousand thousand times more agile and large than the heart and tongues of the Seraphim, that stand with six wings before him; (*Isa. vi. 2*;)—when they have said all they can for the glorifying and praising of the LORD JESUS, they have but spoken little or nothing: his love will surpass the praise of all possible creatures.

O that I could wear this tongue to the stump, in extolling his highness! But it is my sorrow, that I am confounded with his incomparable love; he doth so great things for my soul, and he got never yet any thing of me worth the speaking of. It is a shame to speak of what he hath done for me, and what I do to him again. To Him and his rich grace I recommend you! Pray for me, and forget not to praise.

Aberdeen,
June 17, 1637.

Yours in his LORD JESUS,
S. R.



TO THE LAIRD OF CALLY.

WORTHY SIR,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you! My suit to you is, that ye would lay the foundation sure in your youth. When ye begin to seek CHRIST, try, I pray you, upon what terms ye covenant to follow him, and lay your accounts what it may cost you; that neither summer nor winter may cause you to change your Master. Keep fair to him; and be honest and faithful, that he find not a breach in you. Surely, ye are now in the throng of temptation! When youth is come to its fairest bloom, then the Devil, and the lusts of a deceiving world, and sin, are upon horseback, and follow with up-sails. If this were not, PAUL needed not to have written to a holy youth, TIMOTHY, (a faithful Preacher of the Gospel,) "Flee youthful lusts." Give CHRIST your virgin-love; you cannot put your love and heart in a better hand. O, if ye knew him, and saw his beauty, your love, your heart, your desires, would close with him, and cleave to him. I would seek nothing more to make me happy for evermore, than a clear sight of the beauty of JESUS my LORD: let my eyes enjoy his fairness, and look him for ever in the face, and I have all that can be wished. Get CHRIST rather than gold or silver; seek CHRIST, although ye should lose all things

for him. **GOD** send me a full view of his beauty, if it be possible that my view of it can be full here : but much enjoyment of the love of **CHRIST**, in this world, needeth not to abate the desire of the soul to see him in the other world, where he is seen as he is. I am glad, with all my heart, that ye have given your morning age to this **LORD** : hold on, and weary not ; faint not ; resolve upon suffering for **CHRIST** ; fear not ten days' tribulation, for **CHRIST**'s cross is sweetened with comforts, and hath a taste of **CHRIST** himself. I esteem it my glory, my joy, and my crown ; and I bless him for this honour, to be yoked with **CHRIST**, and married in suffering with him, who therefore was born, and therefore came into the world, that he might bear witness to the truth. Take pains, above all things, for salvation ; for, without running, fighting, sweating, wrestling, heaven is not taken. O happy soul, that crosseth nature, and delighteth to gain that crown of glory ! The very hope of heaven is like wind and sails to the soul, and like wings, when the feet come out of the snare. O ! for what stay we here ? Up, up, after our **LORD JESUS** ! This is not our rest ; what have we to do in this prison, except only to take meat and house-room in it for a time ? Grace, Grace be with you !

Your soul's well-wisher, and **CHRIST**'s prisoner,

Aberdeen, 1637.

S. R.



TO WILLIAM GORDON, AT KENMURE.

DEAR BROTHER,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you ! It is my hearty desire, that my furnace, which is of the **LORD**'s kindling, may sparkle fire upon standers by, to the warming of their hearts with **GOD**'s love. The very dust that falleth from **CHRIST**'s feet, and black cross, is sweeter to me than Kings' crowns. I should be a false witness, if I should not give my **LORD JESUS** a fair testimonial with my whole

soul. My word, I know, will not heighten him ; he needeth not such props under his feet, to raise his glory high : but O that I could raise him to the height of heaven, and the breadth and length of ten heavens, in the estimation of all his younger lovers ! For we have all shapen CHRIST as too narrow and too short ; and formed conceptions of his love, very unworthy of it. O that men were taken with his beauty and fairness ! They would then give over playing with idols, in which there is not half-room for one soul to expatiate ; and man's love is but made hungry in gnawing bare bones, and sucking at dry breasts. They will not come to him, who hath a world of love and goodness and bounty for all. We seek to thaw our frozen hearts at the cold smoke of the short-timed creature, and our souls gather neither heat, nor life, nor light ; for these cannot give to us what they have not in themselves. O that we could burst through this throng of false lovers, and fix our love on CHRIST ! We should find some footing, and sweet ease for our tottering souls, in our LORD. I wish it were in my power, to cry down all love but the love of CHRIST, all gods but CHRIST, all saviours but CHRIST. As for your complaint of deadness and doubtings, CHRIST, I hope, will take your deadness and you together. They are bodies full of boils, and broken bones that need mending, which CHRIST the Physician taketh up : whole vessels are not for CHRIST's art : publicans, sinners, harlots, are ready objects of CHRIST's mercy. The only thing that will bring sinners within a cast of CHRIST's drawing arm, is that which ye write of, some feeling of death and sin ; the more pain, and the more night-watching, and the more fever, the better ; a soul bleeding to death, till CHRIST were cried for in all haste, to come to stem the blood, and close up the wound, with his own hand, were a very good disease,—when many are dying of a whole heart. We have all too little of hell-pain, and terrors in that way : nay, God send me such a hell, as CHRIST hath promised to make a heaven out of ! The thing that we mistake is the want of victory ;

we hold that to be the mark of one that hath no grace; nay, I say, the want of fighting were a mark of no grace; but I shall not say, the want of [full and complete] victory is such a mark. If my fire and the Devil's water make crackling like thunder in the air, I am less afraid; for, where there is fire, it is CHRIST's part to keep in the coal, and to pray the Father that my faith fail not, if I in the mean time be wrestling, and doing, and fighting, and mourning. And ye do well, not to doubt if the ground-stone be sure, but try if it be so; for there is a great difference between doubting that we have grace, and trying if we have grace: the former may be sin, but the latter is good. Holy fear is a searching in the camp, that there be no enemy within our bosom to betray us, and a seeing that all be fast and sure: for I see many leaking vessels fair before the wind, and professors who take their conversion upon trust, and they go on securely, and see not the under-water, till a storm sink them. Each man had need, twice a day, and oftener, to be searched with candles. Pray for me, that the LORD would give me house-room again, to hold a candle to this dark world. Grace, grace be with you!

Yours in his Lord and Master,

Aberdeen, 1637

S. R.



TO ROBERT LENOX, OF DISDOVE.

DEAR BROTHER,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you! I beseech you in the LORD JESUS, make sure work of life eternal. Sow not rotten seed; every man's work will speak for itself, what his seed hath been. O how many see I, who sow to the flesh! Alas, what a crop will that be, when the LORD shall put in his hook to reap this world, which is ripe and white for judgment! I recommend to you sanctification, and that you keep yourself clean from this present evil world. We delight to tell our own dreams, and to flatter

our flesh with the hope we have. It were wisdom for us to be free, plain, honest, and sharp with our own souls; and to charge them to brew better, that they may drink well, and fare well, when time is melted away like snow in summer. O how hard a thing is it, to get the soul to give up all things on this side death and doomsday! We say, we are going from this world, but our heart stirreth not a foot off its seat. Alas! I see few heavenly-minded souls, that have nothing upon the earth but their body of clay going up and down, because their soul and the powers of it are up in heaven, and there their hearts live, desire, enjoy, rejoice. Oh! men's souls have no wings; and therefore night and day they keep their nest, and are not acquainted with CHRIST. Sir, take you to your one thing, to CHRIST, that you may be acquainted with his sweetness and excellency; and charge your love not to dote upon this world, for it will not do your business in that day, when nothing will come in but God's favour. Build upon CHRIST, for when your soul for many years hath wandered through the creatures, ye will come home again with the wind. They are not good,—at least not the soul's good: it is the infinite Godhead that must allay the sharpness of your hunger after happiness; otherwise there shall still be a want of satisfaction to your desires. And, if he would cast in ten worlds, all shall fall through, and your soul shall still cry hunger, black hunger: but, I am sure, there is sufficient for you in CHRIST. O that I could make my LORD JESUS lovely, desirable, and fair to all the world! O let my part of heaven go for it, so he would take my tongue to be his instrument, to set out CHRIST in his whole love, grace, sweetness, and glory, to the eyes and hearts of Jews and Gentiles! But “who is sufficient for these things?” O for the help of Angels' tongues, to make CHRIST amiable to many thousands! O how little doth this world see of him, and how far are they from the love of him, seeing there is so much loveliness, beauty, and sweetness in CHRIST, which no created eye did ever yet see! I would that all men knew his glory, and that I could introduce many to his presence,

to see his beauty, and to be partakers of his high, deep, and broad, and boundless love. O let all the world come near, and see CHRIST; and they shall then see more than I can say of him! O that I had a pledge to lay down for a sea-full of his love; and that I could obtain so much of CHRIST, as would satisfy my longing for him, or rather increase it, till it were in full possession! I know we shall meet; and therein I rejoice. Sir, stand fast in the truth of CHRIST, which ye have received. Yield not to winds, but ride out; and let CHRIST be your anchor. Pray for me his prisoner, and that the LORD would send me among you to feed his people. Grace, grace be with you!

Yours in his LORD JESUS,

Aberdeen, 1637.

S. R.



TO JOHN GORDON.

WORTHY AND DEAR BROTHER,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you! I have been too long in writing to you; but multitude of letters taketh much time from me. I bless his great name, whom I serve with my spirit, if it came to voting amongst angels and men, how excellent and sweet CHRIST is, even in his reproaches and in his cross, I cannot but vote, that all that is in him, both cross and crown, enjoyments and glooms, smiles and frowns, are sweet and glorious. GOD send me no more happiness in heaven, or out of heaven, but CHRIST! For I find this world, when I have looked upon it on both sides, within and without, and when I have seen even the laughing side of it, to be but a fool's idol, a clay-prison. LORD, let it not be the nest that my hope buildeth in! I have now cause to judge my part of this earth not worth a blast of smoke, or a mouthful of brown bread. I wish my hope may take a running-leap, and skip over time's pleasures, and this vain earth, and rest upon my LORD. O how great is our night-darkness in this wilderness! To have any conceit at all of this

world, is as if a man should enclose his hand-ful of water, and, holding his hand in the river, say that all the water of the flood was his; as if it were indeed all within the compass of his hand. Who would not laugh at the thoughts of such an idiot? Verily they have but a hand-ful of water, and are but like a child clasping his two hands about a shadow, who idolize any created hope. I now put the price of a dream, or fable, upon all things, but **GOD**, and that desirable one, my **LORD JESUS**. Let all the world be nothing, (for nothing was their seed and mother,) and let **GOD** be all things.—My very dear Brother, know that ye are as near heaven, as ye are far from yourself, and far from the love of a bewitching world: for this world, in its gain and glory, is but the great and notable common harlot, with whom all the sons of men have been enamoured for these five thousand years. The children they have begotten are but vanity, dreams, imaginations, and night-thoughts: for there is no good ground here, under the covering of heaven, for the poor wearied souls of men to set down their foot upon. Oh! He who is called **GOD**, that One whom they term **JESUS CHRIST**, is indeed worth the having; even if I had given away all without my eye-holes, my soul, and myself, for **JESUS** my **LORD**! O let the claim be cancelled, that the creatures have to me! O that he would claim poor me,—my silly, light, and worthless soul! O that he would pursue his claim to the utmost, and not be without me; for it is my pain to be without him! I see nothing in this life, but mires, and dreams, and beguiling ditches, and ill ground for us to build upon. I am fully persuaded of **CHRIST**'s victory in Scotland; but I fear lest this land be not ripe and white for mercy. O that we could be awakened to prayers and humiliation! Then should the sun shine like seven suns in the heaven; then should the temple of **CHRIST** be builded upon the mountain-tops; and the land from coast to coast should be filled with the glory of the **LORD**. Brother, your hour-glass will quickly pass; and therefore take order with matters betwixt you and

CHRIST, before it come to open pleading: there are no quarters to be had of CHRIST, in open judgment. I know, ye see your thread wearing short; and therefore lose not time. Remember me, his prisoner, that it would please the LORD to bring me again amongst you with abundance of the Gospel. Grace, grace be with you!

Yours in JESUS,

Aberdeen, 1637.

S. R.



TO THE VISCOUNTESS OF KENMURE.

MADAM, ~

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to your Ladyship! I long to hear from you, and that dear child; and for that cause I trouble you with letters. I think the sparrows and the swallows, that build their nests in Anwoth, blessed birds. The LORD hath made all my congregation desolate. Alas, I am oft at this, "Show me wherefore thou contendest with me." O earth, earth, cover not the violence done to me! I know it is my faithless jealousy, in this my dark night, to take a friend for a foe. I chide with him, but he giveth me fair words. Seeing that my sins, and especially the sins of my youth, deserved strokes, how I am obliged to my LORD, who, amongst many crosses, hath given me a chosen cross; to suffer for the name of my LORD JESUS! Since I must have chains, he would put golden chains on me, watered with many consolations. My crosses come, through the fingers of mercy and love, from the kind heart of a brother, CHRIST my LORD; and therefore they must be sweet. O what am I, such a lump, such a rotten mass of sin, to be counted worthy to be stricken with the best and most honourable rod in my Father's house,—the golden rod, wherewith my eldest Brother, the LORD, heir of the inheritance, and his faithful witnesses, were stricken! I should be thankful and rejoice; but my beholders and lovers in CHRIST have eyes of flesh, and have made my one to be ten; and I am

somebody in their books: there are armies of thoughts within me, saying the contrary, and laughing at their wide mistake. If my inner-side were seen, I should lose and forfeit love and respect; and pity would come in the place of these. O that they would yet set me lower, and my Well-beloved, CHRIST, higher! I would have had grace to be glad and cheerful, that God's glory might ride and openly triumph, before the view of men, angels, devils, earth, heaven, hell, sun, moon, and all God's creatures, upon my pain and sufferings; providing always I felt not the LORD's displeasure. But I fear lest his fair glory should be soiled in coming through such a foul creature as I am. If I could be the sinless matter of glorifying CHRIST, although to my loss, pain, sufferings, and extremity of wretchedness, how would my soul rejoice! But I am far, far from this. He knoweth, his love hath made me a prisoner, and bound me hand and foot; but it is my pain that I cannot get loose hands, and a loosed heart, to do service to my LORD JESUS, and to speak his love. I confess, I have neither tongue nor pen to do it. CHRIST's love is more than my praises, and above the thoughts of the angel GABRIEL, and all the mighty hosts that stand before the throne of God. I think shame, that my foul tongue, and polluted heart, should come in to help others to sing the praises of CHRIST: all I now do, is to wish the choir to become crowded, and to grow in the extolling of CHRIST. Woe, woe is me, for my guiltiness, seen to few; my hidden wounds, still bleeding within me, are before the eyes of no man; but if my LORD JESUS were not still bathing, washing, balming, healing, and binding them up, they would break out to my shame. I know not what will be the end of my suffering; I have but seen the one side of my cross; what will be the other side, He knoweth, who hath his fire in Zion. Let Him lead me, if it were through hell. I thank my LORD, my waiting to see what more CHRIST will do to me, is my joy. O that my ease, joy, and pleasure for evermore, were laid in pledge to buy praises to CHRIST! But I am far from this. It is easy for a poor

soul, in the deep debt of CHRIST's love, to feed upon broad wishes that CHRIST may be honoured; but in performance I am stark nought. I have nothing, nothing, to give to CHRIST, but poverty. I would be glad to hear that CHRIST's claim to you were still the more, and that you were still going forward, and that you were nearer to Him. I do not honour CHRIST myself, but I wish all others did. I am somewhat encouraged that your Ladyship is not dry and cold to CHRIST's prisoner, as some are: I hope it is put up in my Master's account-book. I am not much grieved, that my jealous husband should break in pieces my idols, so that either they dare not, or will not, do for me. My Master needeth not their help, but they need to help him. Thus, recommending you to God's dearest mercy, I rest,

Aberdeen,
July 17, 1637.

Your own, in JESUS, at all obedience,
S. R.



TO HIS PARISHIONERS.

DEARLY beloved, and longed-for in the LORD, my crown and my joy in the day of CHRIST: grace be to you, and peace, from GOD our Father, and our LORD JESUS CHRIST! I long exceedingly to know, if you follow on to know the LORD. My day-thoughts and my night-thoughts are of you; while ye sleep, I am afraid of your souls, lest they be off the rock. Next to my LORD JESUS, and this fallen Kirk, ye have the greatest share of my sorrow, and also of my joy; ye are the matter of the tears, care, fears, and daily prayers, of an oppressed prisoner of CHRIST. As I am in bonds for my high and lofty One, my royal and princely Master, so I am in bonds for you: for I should have slept in my warm nest, and kept the fat world in my arms, and the cords of my tabernacle would have been fastened more strongly, if I had been drawn on to cause you to eat pastures trodden on

with men's feet, and to drink foul and muddy waters. But truly the Almighty was a terror to me, and his fear made me afraid. O my LORD, judge if my ministry be not dear to me, but not so dear by many degrees as CHRIST JESUS, my LORD! GOD knoweth the heavy and sad sabbaths I have had. Since I laid down at my Master's feet my two shepherd's staves, I have often been saying, as it is written, (*Lam. iii. 52, 53,*) "My enemies chased me sore like a bird without cause; they have cut off my life in the dungeon, and cast a stone upon me:" for, next to CHRIST, I had but one joy, the apple of the eye of my delights, to preach CHRIST my LORD; and they have violently plucked that away from me. It was to me like the poor man's one eye, and they have put out that eye, and quenched my light in the inheritance of the LORD; but my eye is towards the LORD. I know I shall see the salvation of GOD, and that my hope shall not always be forgotten. And my sorrow shall want nothing to complete it, and to make me say, 'What availeth it me to live?'—if ye follow the voice of a stranger, of one that cometh into the sheep-fold, not by CHRIST the door, but climbeth up another way. If the man build his hay and stubble upon the golden foundation, CHRIST JESUS, already laid among you, and ye follow him, I assure you that the man's work shall burn, and ye and he both shall be in danger of everlasting burning. O that any pain, any sorrow, any loss, which I can suffer for CHRIST, and for you, were laid in pledge to buy CHRIST's love to you, and that I could lay my dearest joys, next to CHRIST my LORD, in the gap betwixt you and eternal destruction! O that I had paper as broad as heaven and earth, and ink as the sea, and all the rivers and fountains of the earth, and were able to write the love, the worth, the excellency, the sweetness, and the due praises of our dearest and fairest Well-beloved; and then that ye could read and understand it! What could I want, if my ministry among you should make a marriage between the Bride, in those bounds, and the heavenly Bridegroom? O how rich a

prisoner were I, if I could obtain of my LORD (before whom I stand for you) the salvation of you all! O what a prey had I gotten, to have you caught in CHRIST's net! My witness is above, your heaven would be two heavens to me; and the salvation of you all, as two salvations to me! I would subscribe a suspension of my heaven, for many hundred years, (according to GOD's good pleasure,) if ye were sure in the upper lodging, in our Father's house, before me. I counsel you, beware of the new and strange heaven of men's salvations, beside and against the word of GOD; ye see whither they lead you. Continue still in the doctrine which ye have received. Ye heard of me the whole counsel of GOD; take CHRIST in his rags and losses, and as persecuted by men; and be content to sigh, and pant up the mountain, with CHRIST's cross on your back;—let me be reputed a false prophet, if your LORD JESUS shall not stand by you, and maintain you, and maintain your cause against your enemies. I have heard, (and my soul is grieved for it,) that, since my departure from you, many among you are turned back, from the good old way, to the dog's vomit again. Let me speak to these men. It was not without GOD's special direction, that the first sentence that ever my mouth uttered to you, was that recorded by JOHN; (*chap. ix. 39;*) "And JESUS said, For judgment came I into the world, that they which see not might see, and they which see might be made blind." It is possible that my first meeting and yours may be, when we shall both stand before the dreadful Judge of the world: and in the name and authority of the SON of GOD, my great King and Master, I write, by these presents, summons to these men; I arrest their souls and bodies to the day of our appearance; their eternal damnation stands subscribed and sealed in heaven, by the hand-writing of the great Judge of quick and dead; and I am ready to stand up, as a preaching witness against such to their face, in that day, and to say Amen to their condemnation,—except they repent. The vengeance of the Gospel is heavier than the vengeance of the Law; the Mediator's

malediction and vengeance are double vengeance ; and that vengeance is the due portion of such men ; and there I leave them, as bound men, until they repent and amend. You were witnesses, how the LORD's day was spent, while I was among you. O sacrilegious robber of God's day, what wilt thou answer the ALMIGHTY, when he seeketh so many sabbaths back again from thee ? What will the curser, swearer, and blasphemer do, when his tongue shall be roasted in that broad and burning lake of fire and brimstone ? And what will the drunkard do, when tongue, lights, liver, bones, and all, shall boil and fry in a torturing fire ? For he shall be far from his barrels of strong drink then ; and there is not a cold well of water for him in hell ! What shall be the case of the wretch, the covetous man, the oppressor, the deceiver, the earth-worm, who can never get his fill of clay, when, in the day of CHRIST, gold and silver must lie burned in ashes, and he must appear and answer his Judge, and quit his clayey and naughty heaven ? Woe, woe for evermore, be to the time-turning Atheist, that hath one God and one religion for summer, and another God and another religion for winter ; who hath a conscience for every fair and market ; and whose soul runneth upon those oiled wheels, time, custom, the world, and the command of men. O that the careless and sleeping man, who lays down his head upon time's bosom, and giveth his conscience to a deputy, and sleepeth so, until the smoke of hell-fire shall fly up in his throat, and cause him to start out of his doleful bed ;— O that such a man would awake ! Many woes are for the over-gilded and gold-plastered hypocrite ; a heavy doom is for the liar and white-tongued flatterer ; and the flying hook of God's fearful vengeance, twenty cubits long, and ten cubits broad, that goeth out from the face of God, shall enter into the house, and upon the soul, of him that stealeth, and sweareth falsely by God's name. I denounce eternal burning, hotter than Sodom's flames, upon the men that boil in the filthy lusts of fornication, adultery, incest, and the like wickedness ; there is no room, no, not a

oot broad, for such vile dogs, within the holy Jerusalem ! Many of you put off all with this excuse, "God forgive us ; we know no better !" I renew my old answer, (*2 Thess. i. 7, 8 :*) The Judge is coming "in flaming fire, with all his mighty angels, to render vengeance to all those that *know not God.*" I have often told you, security shall slay you. All men say they have faith ; all believe ; every foul dog is clean enough, and good enough, for the new Jerusalem above ! Every man hath conversion, and the new birth ; but they had never a sick night for sin ; conversion came to them in a night-dream. In a word, hell will be empty at the day of judgment, and heaven full. Alas ! it is neither easy, nor ordinary, to believe and to be saved. Many must stand in the end at heaven's gates ; when they go to take out their faith, they take out a fair nothing. O lamentable disappointment ! I pray you, I charge you, in the name of CHRIST, make fast work of CHRIST and salvation. I know there are some believers among you ; and I write to you, O poor broken-hearted believers : all the comforts of CHRIST in the New and Old Testament are yours. O what a father and husband you have ! O that I had pen and ink to write of him ! If heaven and earth were consolidated in massy and pure gold, it would not weigh the thousandth part of CHRIST's love to a soul, even to me a poor prisoner. O it is a massy and marvellous love ! Men and angels, unite your force and strength in one ; yet shall ye not heave nor poise it off the ground. Ten thousand thousand worlds, as many worlds as angels can number, and then as a new world of angels can multiply, would not all be the balk of a balance, to weigh CHRIST's excellency, sweetness, and love. I wonder that men stay away from CHRIST. I would esteem myself blessed, if I could gather all the world that are living upon the earth, Jews and Gentiles, and all that shall be born to the blowing of the last trumpet, to flock round about CHRIST, and to stand looking, wondering, admiring, and adoring his beauty and sweetness ; for his fire is hotter than any other fire, his love is sweeter than common love, his beauty surpasseth all other beauty. O that ye would fall in love

with him ! How blessed were I, how glad would my soul be, to help you to love him ! But, amongst us all, we could not love him enough. He is the SON of the FATHER's love ; and GOD's delight, the FATHER's love, lieth all upon him ! Invite him, and take him home to your houses, in the exercise of prayer, morning and evening, as I often desired you ; especially now, let him not want lodging in your houses, nor lie in the fields, when he is shut out of pulpits. If ye will be content to take heaven by violence, and to have the wind on your face for CHRIST and his cross ; I am here one, who have some trial of CHRIST's cross, and I can say, that CHRIST was ever kind to me, but he overcometh himself (if I may speak so) in kindness, while I suffer for him. I give you my word for it, CHRIST's cross is not so evil as they call it ; it is sweet, light, and comfortable. I would not want the visitations of love, and my LORD's delightful smiles, under my sufferings for him, for a mountain of fine gold, nor for all the honours, court, and grandeur of velvet Kirk-men. CHRIST hath the heart of my love ; " I am my Beloved's, and my Well-beloved is mine." O that ye were all fast to CHRIST ! O my dearly beloved in the LORD, I would I could change my voice, and had a tongue tuned with the hand of my LORD, and had the art of speaking of CHRIST, that I might paint out unto you the highness, and greatness, and excellency, of that heavenly Bridegroom ! I beseech you, by the mercies of the LORD, by the sighs, tears, and heart-blood of our LORD JESUS, and by the salvation of your poor and precious souls, set out up the mountain, that ye and I may meet before the LAMB's throne, amongst the congregation of the first-born. The LORD grant, that ye and I may put up our hands together, to pluck and eat the apples of the tree of life ; and may feast together, and drink of that pure river of the water of life, that cometh out from under the throne of GOD, and from the LAMB ! O how little is your hand-breadth of days here ! Your inch of time is less than when ye and I parted ; eternity, eternity is coming, posting on with wings ; then shall every man's blacks and whites be brought to light. O how low

will your thoughts be of this fair-skinned, but heart-rotten apple, the vain, vain world, when the worms shall make their houses in your eye-holes, and shall eat off the flesh from the ball of your cheeks, and shall make that body a number of dry bones ! Think not that the common gate of serving God, "as neighbours and others do," will bring you to heaven ; few, few are saved ! The Devil's court is thick ; he hath the greatest number of mankind for his vassals. I know, this world is a great forest of thorns in your way to heaven ; but you must go through it. Acquaint yourselves with the LORD, hold fast CHRIST ; hear his voice only ; bless his name ; sanctify and keep his day ; keep the new commandment, "Love one another ;" let the HOLY SPIRIT dwell in your bodies, and be pure and holy ; love not the world ; lie not, love and follow truth ; learn to know God ; keep in mind what I taught you, for God will seek an account of it, when I am far from you ; abstain from all evil, and all appearance of evil ; follow good carefully, and seek peace and follow after it ; honour your King, and pray for him ; and remember me to God in your prayers,—I do not forget you. I told you often, while I was with you, and now I write it again, that heavy, sad, and sore is the stroke of the LORD's wrath, which is coming upon Scotland. Woe, woe, woe to this harlot-land ; for they shall take the cup of God's wrath from his hand, and drink, and fall, and not rise again. In, with speed, to your strong hold, ye prisoners of hope, and hide you there, until the anger of the LORD pass. Follow not the pastors of this land, for the sun is gone down upon them ; as the LORD liveth, they lead you from CHRIST, and from the good old way. Yet the LORD will keep the holy city, and make this withered Kirk to bud again, like a rose, and a field blessed of the LORD. The grace of the LORD JESUS CHRIST be with you all ! The prayers and blessing of a prisoner of CHRIST, in bonds for him, and for you, be with you all ! Amen.

Aberdeen,
July 14, 1637.

Your lawful and loving Pastor,
S. R.

TO MR. JAMES FLEMING.

Reverend and well-beloved in our LORD,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you ! I cannot but testify unto you, my dear brother, what sweetness I find in our Master's cross ; but, alas ! what can I either do or suffer for him ? If I had as many lives as there have been drops of rain since the creation, I would think them too little for our Well-beloved ; but my sorrow is, that I find not ways to set out the praises of his love to others. I am not able, by tongue, pen, or sufferings, to provoke many to fall in love with him ; but he knoweth, whom I love to serve in the spirit, what I would do and suffer by his strength, if I might so make my LORD JESUS lovely to many thousands in this land. I think it amongst God's wonders, that he will take any praise or glory from such a forlorn sinner as I am. But when CHRIST worketh, he needeth not ask the question, by whom he will be glorious. I know that,—since his glory at the beginning did shine out of nothing, to set up such a fair house for men and angels, and so many glorious creatures to proclaim his goodness, power, and wisdom,—if I were burned to ashes, out of the smoke of my dissolved body he could raise glory to himself. His glory is *his* end ; O that I could join with him, to make it *my* end ! I would think that fellowship with him sweet and glorious. But, alas, few know the guiltiness that is on my part ; it is a wonder that this good cause hath not been marred in my foul hands : but I rejoice in this, that my LORD JESUS hath found a ready occasion for the exercise of his free grace, and matchless mercy, in my wants. My loathsome wretchedness and wants have alone qualified me for CHRIST, and for the riches of his glorious grace. One thing I know, we shall not all be able to come near his excellency with eye, heart, or tongue ; for he is above all created thoughts. “ All nations before him are as nothing, and less than nothing ; he sitteth in the circuit of heaven,

and the inhabitants of the earth are as grasshoppers before him." O that men would praise him ! I never find myself nearer CHRIST, than after a great weight and sense of deadness, and gracelessness : I think the sense of our wants, when withal we have a restlessness, and a sort of spiritual impatience under them, is that which maketh an open door to CHRIST ; and when we think we are going backward, because we *feel* deadness, we are going forward : for the more sense, the more life ; and no sense argueth no life. There is no sweeter fellowship with CHRIST, than to bring our wounds and our sores to him. But for myself, I am ashamed of CHRIST's goodness since the time of my bonds ; for he hath been pleased to open new treasures of grace, and to give visitations of love, and access to himself, in this strange land. I would think a fulness of his love to be young and green heaven ; and when he is pleased to come, and the tide is in, and the sea full, and the King and a poor prisoner together in the house of wine, the black tree of the cross is not so heavy as a feather. I cannot but give CHRIST an honourable testimony. I see the LORD can ride through his enemies' bands, and triumph in the sufferings of his own. This blind world sees not that suffering is CHRIST's armour, wherein He is victorious : and they that contend with Zion, see not what He is doing, when they are set to work, as undersmiths and servants, to the task of refining the saints, or that their office in God's house is to scour and cleanse the vessels for the King's table. I marvel not to see them triumph, and sit at ease in Zion ; our Father must lay up his rods, and keep them carefully for his own use : our LORD cannot want fire in his house ; "his furnace is in Zion, and his fire in Jerusalem ;" but the adversaries little know the counsels and the thoughts of the LORD. As to your complaints of your ministry, I now think all I did too little. Plainness, freedom, watchfulness, and fidelity, shall swell upon you, in exceeding large comforts, in your sufferings. The feeding of CHRIST's lambs in private visitations and catechising, in painful preaching, in fair ho-

nesty, and free warning of the flock, is a sufferer's garland. O ten thousand times blessed are they, who are honoured of CHRIST to be faithful and painful in winning souls to CHRIST! My dear brother, I know that ye think more on this than I can: and I rejoice that your purpose is, in the LORD's strength, to come out, and call yourself CHRIST's man, when so many are denying him, as fearing that CHRIST cannot do for himself and them. I am a lost man for ever, or this is the way to salvation, even this way which they call heresy, and which men now do mock and scoff at. I am confirmed now that CHRIST will accept of his servants' sufferings as good service to him at the day of his appearance. Our Master is not far off: O that we could wait on, and be faithful! The tender favour and love of our LORD JESUS CHRIST be with you! Help me with your prayers; and desire my other brethren to take courage for their Master.

Aberdeen,
Aug. 15, 1637.

Yours in his LORD JESUS,

S. R.



TO THE VISCOUNTESS OF KENMURE.

MADAM,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to your Ladyship! God be thanked, ye are yet in possession of CHRIST, and that sweet child. I pray God that the former may be a sure heritage, and the latter a loan for your comfort, while ye do good to his poor afflicted and withered Mount Sion. And who knoweth but our LORD hath comforts laid up in store for her and you? Long since, ye were half challenging death's cold kindness, in being so slow to come and loose a tired prisoner: but ye stand in need of all the crosses, losses, changes, and sad hearts, that befell you since that time. CHRIST knoweth that the body of sin unsubdued will take them all, and more. We know that PAUL had need of the Devil's service to buffet him; and far more we. But, my dear and honourable Lady, spend

your sand-glass well. Your crosses will but convoy you to heaven's gates; *in* they cannot go; the gates shall be closed on them, when you shall be admitted to the throne. Time standeth not still; eternity is hard at our door. O what is laid up for you! Therefore harden your face against the wind; and know that the LORD, your husband, is making ready for you. The heavenly Bridegroom would fain have that day,—as gladly as you would wish to have it; he hath not forgotten you. I have heard a rumour of the purpose to banish me; but let it come, if God so will; the other side of the sea is my Father's ground, as well as this side. I shall remit it over to CHRIST, what I shall do in this case. I know certainly that my LORD JESUS will not mar nor spill my sufferings; he hath use for them in his house. O what it worketh on me, to remember that a stranger shall build hay and stubble upon the golden foundation, which I laid amongst that people at Anwoth! But I know that Providence looketh straight out, and through all men's darkness. O that I could wait upon the LORD! I had but one eye, one joy, one delight, even to preach CHRIST; and "my mother's sons were angry at me," and have put out the poor man's one eye, and what have I behind? I am sure this sour world hath lost my heart deservedly; but O that there were a days-man to lay his hand upon us both, and determine upon my part of it! Alas, that innocent and lovely truth should be sold! My tears are little worth; but yet for this thing I weep, that my dear and lovely LORD JESUS should be unknown in his own house! It reckoneth little of five hundred the like of me. The prisoner's blessings, with the good-will and long-lasting kindness and comforts of the very God of peace, be on your Ladyship, and your sweet child! Grace, grace be with you!

Aberdeen,
Sept. 7, 1637.

Your Honour's, at all obedience in JESUS,
S. R.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD LINDSAY.

Right honourable and my very good LORD,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to your Lordship! Pardon my boldness to express myself to your Lordship, at this so needful a time. Blessed are they who will come out, and help CHRIST against the mighty. The shields of the earth, and the nobles, are debtors to CHRIST for their honour, and should bring their glory and honour to the New Jerusalem. (*Rev. xxi. 24.*) Alas, that great men should be so far from subjecting themselves to the sweet yoke of CHRIST, that they burst his bonds asunder! I am sure, when you leave this perishing life, and depart hence, and take shipping, and make over for eternity, which is the yonder side of time, and look over your shoulder then to that which ye have done, spoken, and suffered for CHRIST, your accounts shall more sweetly smile upon you, than if you had two worlds of gold to leave to your posterity. O my dear Lord, consider that our Master, eternity, judgment, and the last reckoning, will be upon us in the twinkling of an eye. The blast of the last trumpet, now hard at hand, will cry down all Acts of Parliament against CHRIST! There will be shortly a proclamation by one standing in the clouds, "that time shall be no more," and that Kings of clay shall be no more," and that prisons, confinements, forfeitures of nobles, or hazard of lands, houses, and name for CHRIST, shall be no more! This world's span-length of time is drawn now to less than half an inch, and to the point of the evening of the day of this old and gray-haired world; and therefore be fixed and fast for CHRIST and his truth, for a time; and fear not him, whose life goeth out at his nostrils, and who shall die as a man. Losses for CHRIST are but our goods given out in bank, in CHRIST's hand. Kings are time's idols; but a sight of our invisible King shall decry and darken all the glory of this world. At the day of CHRIST, truth shall be truth, and not treason.

Alas ! it is pitiful, that silence, and to cast a covering over a good profession, (as if it blushed at light,) are thought a sure way through this life : but the safest way, I am persuaded, is to suffer with CHRIST, and to hazard fairly for him ; for heaven is but a company of noble venturers for CHRIST. CHRIST shall grow green, and blossom, as the Rose of Sharon, yet in Scotland ; although now his leaf seemeth to wither, and his root to dry up. Your noble ancestors have been enrolled amongst the worthies of this nation, as the sure friends of the Bridegroom, and valiant for CHRIST. I hope ye will follow on, to come to the streets for the same LORD : it shall be your glory, and the sure foundation of your house, (now when houses are tumbling down, and birds building their nests, and thorns and briers growing up, where nobles did spread a table,) if you engage your estate and nobility for this noble King JESUS. All the world shall fall before Him ; and (as God liveth) every arm lifted up to take the crown from his royal head, shall be broken from the shoulder-blade. The eyes that behold CHRIST weep in sackcloth, and wallow in his blood, and will not help, even these eyes shall rot away in their eye-holes. O that ye, and the nobles of this land, saw the beauty of that world's wonder, JESUS our King ! O what would men count of clay-estates, of time-eaten life, or of moth-eaten worldly glory, in comparison of that fairest of GOD's creation, the SON of the FATHER's delights ! I have but small experience of suffering for him ; but let my Judge and Witness in heaven lay my soul in the balance of justice, if I find not a young heaven, and a little paradise of glorious comforts here beneath the moon, in suffering for him in his truth. O it is my sorrow, my daily pain, that men will not come and see. I should be ashamed to believe, that it should be possible for any soul to think he could be a loser for CHRIST, suppose he should lend CHRIST the Lordship of Lindsay, or some such great worldly estate. Therefore, my worthy and dear Lord, set your face against the opposites of JESUS ; let your soul take courage to come under his banner, and to

appear as a soldier for him; and the prayers of the "Prisoners of Hope" shall be with you. To his saving grace I recommend your Lordship and your house; and am still CHRIST's prisoner, and

Aberdeen,
Sept. 7, 1637.

Your Lordship's obliged servant,

S. R.



TO THE LORD BOYD.

My very honourable and very good LORD,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you! I am glad to hear that you, in the morning of your short day, mind CHRIST; and that you love the honour of his kingdom. I beseech your Lordship, begin now to frame your love, and to cast it in no mould but one, that it may be for CHRIST only; for when your love is now in the framing, it will take best with CHRIST. If any other than JESUS get it when it is green and young, CHRIST will be an uncouth and strange world to you. Promise the lodging of your soul first to CHRIST, and stand by your first covenant. It is easy to master an arrow, and to set it right, ere the string be drawn; but when once it is shot, and the flight begun, then ye have no power at all to command it. It were a blessed thing, if your love could now level at CHRIST, and his fair face were the mark ye shot at; for, when your love is loosed, and in its motion to fetch home an idol, ye shall not then have power to call home the arrow; and ye shall hardly give CHRIST what ye scarcely have yourself. I speak not this, as if youth itself could fetch heaven and CHRIST. Believe it, my LORD, it is hardly credible, what a nest of dangerous temptations youth is; how inconsiderate, foolish, proud, vain, heady, rash, profane, and careless of God, this piece of your life is; so that the Devil findeth in that age a garnished and swept house for himself, and for seven devils worse than himself. For then affections are

lofty and stirring ; then the old man hath much will and little wit ; and hands, feet, wanton eyes, and profane ears, as his servants, and as a King's officers at command, come and go at his will. And therefore, O what a sweet couple are youth and grace, CHRIST and a young man ! This is a meeting not to be found in every town. None, who have been at CHRIST, can bring back to your Lordship a report answerable to his worth ; for CHRIST cannot be commended according to his worth. " Come and see," is the most faithful messenger to speak of him ; a little persuasion would prevail where this was. It is impossible, in setting forth CHRIST's love, to pass over truth's line : the discourses of angels would for ever be on the nether side of truth. The infiniteness, the boundlessness, of that incomparable excellency that is in JESUS, is a great word. God send me, if it were but the relics and leavings of his matchless love ; and, suppose I never got another heaven, (providing this blessed fire were ever burning,) I could not but be happy for ever. O what glory were it to lend your honour to CHRIST, and to his Jerusalem ! Ye are one of Zion's born sons ; your parents would venture you upon CHRIST's errands : therefore I beseech you by the mercies of God, by the death and wounds of JESUS, by the hope of your glorious inheritance, and by the comfort and hope of the joyful presence ye would have when ye are putting your foot in the dark grave, take courage for CHRIST's truth, and the honour of his free kingdom. For, although ye be a young flower, and green before the sun, ye know not how soon death will cause you to cast your bloom, and wither,—root, and branch, and leaves : and therefore, write up what ye have to do for CHRIST, and make a treasure of good works, and begin in time. It goeth now under the name of wisdom, for men to cast their cloak over CHRIST, and their profession ; as if CHRIST were stolen goods, and durst not be avouched. But it is true honour and glory, to be the fast friends of the SAVIOUR ; to own CHRIST's bleeding head, and his forsaken cause ; and to contend legally, and in the wisdom of God, for our LORD

JESUS. To his rich grace and sweet presence, and the everlasting consolation of the COMFORTER, I recommend your Lordship; and am

Aberdeen,
Sept. 7, 1637.

Your Lordship's, in his LORD JESUS,

S. R.



TO THE LAIRD GAITGIRTH.

MUCH HONOURED SIR,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you! I can do no more but thank you in paper, and remember you to Him whom I serve, for your kindness and care of a prisoner. I bless the LORD, that the cause for which I suffer, needeth not to blush before Kings. CHRIST's white, honest, and fair truth needeth neither wax pale for fear, nor blush for shame. I bless the LORD, who hath given you the grace to own CHRIST now, when so many are afraid to profess him. Alas! that so many in these days are carried with the times; as if their conscience rolled upon oiled wheels, so do they go any way in which the wind bloweth them. Sir, go on to own CHRIST, and his oppressed truth. The end of sufferings for the Gospel is rest and gladness. Light and joy are sown for the mourners in Zion; and the harvest (which is of God's making for time and manner) is near. Crosses have right to CHRIST in his members, till the whole mystical CHRIST be in heaven. There will be rain, and hail, and storm, in the saints' clouds, till God cleanse with fire the works of creation, and till he burn the house of heaven and earth, which men's sin hath subjected unto vanity. They are blessed, who suffer and sin not; for suffering is the badge that CHRIST hath put upon his followers. Take what way we can to heaven, the way is hedged up with crosses; there is no way but to break through them. Wit and wiles will not find out a way *about* the cross of CHRIST; but we must go *through*. One thing by experience my LORD hath taught me,—

that the waters betwixt this and heaven may all be ridden, if we be well-horsed ; I mean, if we be in CHRIST ; and not one shall drown by the way, but such as love their own destruction. O that we could wait on for a time, and believe in the dark the salvation of God ! At least we are to believe good of CHRIST, till he give us the slip ; (which is impossible ;) and to take his word for security, that he will fill up all the blanks in his promises, and give what we want. But to the unbeliever CHRIST's testament is white, blank, unwritten paper. Worthy and dear Sir, set your face to heaven ; and receive the kingdom as a child : without this, he that knew the way said, there is no entry into it. But CHRIST will be willing to lead a poor sinner. O what love my poor soul hath found in him, in the house of my pilgrimage ! Suppose love were lost in heaven and earth, I dare swear it may be found in CHRIST. Now the very God of peace establish you, till the day of the glorious appearance of CHRIST !

Aberdeen,
Sept. 7, 1637.

Yours in JESUS,

S. R.



TO THE LADY GAITGIRTH.

Much honoured and Christian Lady !

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you ! I long to hear how it goeth with you and your children. I exhort you, not to faint in your journey : the way is not so long to your home, as it was ; ye shall come ere long to be within your arm-length of the glorious crown. Your LORD JESUS did sweat and pant before he got up that mount ; he cried, " Father save me ; " it was he who said, (*Psal.* xxii. 14, 15,) " I am poured out like water : all my bones are out of joint ; " (CHRIST was as if they had broken him upon the wheel ;) " my heart is like wax, it is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd." I am sure, ye love the way the better, because

his holy feet trod it before you. I know ye have sad hours, when the COMFORTER is hid under a veil, and when the seeker misseth Him whom the soul loveth: but even his unkindness is kind, his absence lovely, till God send CHRIST himself in his own sweet presence. Make his comforts your own, and be not strange and shamefaced with CHRIST. Free dealing is best for him; it is his liking. When your winter storms are over, the summer of your LORD shall come. Your sadness is pregnant with joy; he will do you good in the latter end. Take no heavier lift of your children than your LORD alloweth; give them room beside your heart, but not in the yolk of your heart, where CHRIST should be;—for then they are your idols. If your LORD take any of them home before the storm come on, take it well; the owner of the orchard may take down two or three apples from his own tree before Midsummer; and it would not be seemly that his servant should chide him for it. Let our LORD pluck his own fruit at any season he pleaseth. They are not lost, where our LORD's best jewels lie. They are all free goods that are there; Death can have no law to arrest any thing that is within the walls of the New Jerusalem.

Now the great Shepherd of the sheep, and the very God of peace, confirm and establish you to the day of the appearance of CHRIST our LORD!

Aberdeen,
Sept. 7, 1637.

Yours in his LORD JESUS,

S. R.



TO JOHN FLEMMING, BAILLIE OF LEITH.

Much honoured in the LORD,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you! I am still on good terms with CHRIST. However my LORD's wind blow, I have the advantage of a calm and sunny side of CHRIST. Devils, and hell, and devils' servants, are all blown blind, in pursuing the LORD's chosen. "They

shall be as a night-dream, who fight against Mount Zion." Worthy Sir, I hope ye take to heart the worth of your calling. The port is open for us: as fast as time weareth out, we flee away: eternity is at our elbow. O how blest are they, who in time make CHRIST sure for themselves! Salvation is a great errand; I find it hard to fetch heaven. O that we could take pains with our lamps, for the Bridegroom's coming! The other side of this world will be turned up incontinent; and up shall become down; and these that are weeping in sackcloth shall triumph on white horses, with him whose name is "THE WORD OF GOD." These dying idols, the fair creatures which we love better than our Creator, will pass away like snow-water. The Godhead, the Godhead,—a communion with GOD in CHRIST,—to be halvers with CHRIST of the purchased inheritance in heaven,—should be your scope and aim. For myself, when I lay my accounts, O what weighing is in CHRIST! O love, surpassing love in JESUS! I have no fault to find with that love, but that it seemeth to deal niggardly with me; I have little of it. O that I had CHRIST's hand, subscribed by himself, for my fill of it! What garland have I, or what crown, if I looked right on things, but JESUS? O there is no room in us, on this side of the water, for that love! This narrow earth, and these narrow souls, can hold little of it. Glory would enlarge us, that we might be able to comprehend it, which yet is incomprehensible. Grace be with you!

Aberdeen,
Sept. 7, 1637.

Yours in his LORD JESUS,
S. R.



TO THE LADY ROWALLAN.

MADAM,

I REJOICE in our LORD JESUS on your behalf, that it hath pleased him to manifest the savour of his love in CHRIST JESUS to your soul, in the revelation of his will and mind to you, now, when so many are shut up in

unbelief. O the sweet change you have made, in leaving the black kingdom of this world and sin, and coming over to our SAVIOUR's new kingdom, so as to know, and to be captivated by, the love of the SON of GOD. I beseech you, Madam, in the LORD, make now sure work; and see that the old house be rased from the foundation, and that the new building of your soul be of CHRIST's own laying; for then wind and storm shall neither loose it, nor shake it asunder. Many now take CHRIST by guess: be sure that it be he, and only he, whom ye have met with. His lovely voice, his fair countenance, his sweet working in the soul, will not lie; they will soon tell if it be CHRIST indeed: therefore be sure that ye take CHRIST himself, and take him with his FATHER's blessing. Your lines are well fallen; it could not have been better, nor so well with you, if they had not fallen in these places; in heaven, or out of heaven, there is nothing better, nothing so excellent as CHRIST. Much joy may ye have of Him! But take his cross with himself cheerfully: CHRIST and his cross are not separable in this life, although CHRIST and his cross part at heaven's door; for there is no room for crosses in heaven. One tear, one sigh, one sad heart, one fear, one loss, or thought of trouble, cannot find lodging there; they are but the marks of our LORD JESUS down in this stormy country, and on this side of death. Sorrow and the saints are not married together; or, suppose it be so, heaven shall make a divorce. I find that his sweet presence eateth out the bitterness of sorrow and suffering. I think it a sweet thing, that CHRIST saith of my cross, "Half-mine;" and that he divideth these sufferings with me, and taketh the largest share to himself; nay, that I and my whole cross are wholly CHRIST's. O what a portion is CHRIST! O that the saints would dig deeper in the treasures of his wisdom and excellency! Thus, recommending your Ladyship to the good-will and tender mercies of our LORD, I rest

Aberdeen,
Sept. 7, 1637.

Your Ladyship's,
S. R.

TO MARGARET BALLANTINE.

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be unto you ! It is more than time that I should have written to you ; but it is yet good time, if I could help your soul to mend your pace, and to go more swiftly to your heavenly country. For truly ye have need to make all haste, because the inch of your day that remaineth will quickly slip away ; for whether we sleep or wake, our glass runneth ; the tide waiteth for no man. Beware of a deception in the matter of your salvation ! Woe, woe, for evermore, to them that lose that prize ! For what is behind, when the soul is once lost, but that sinners warm their clay-houses at a fire of their own kindling, for a day or two, which doth rather suffocate with its smoke, than warm them, and at length lie down in sorrow, and are clothed with everlasting shame ? I would seek no further measure of faith, to begin with, than to believe steadfastly the doctrine of God's justice, his all-devouring wrath and everlasting burning, where sinners are burned soul and body, in a lake of fire and brimstone. There they would wish no other goods, but the thousandth part of a fountain to cool their tongue. They would there buy death by enduring pain and torment for as many years as God hath created drops of rain since the creation : but there is no market there for buying or selling life or death. Alas, the greatest part of this world run to the place of torment rejoicing and dancing, eating, drinking, and sleeping. My counsel to you is, that ye start in time after CHRIST ; for, if ye go quickly, CHRIST is not far before you : ye shall overtake him. O LORD GOD, what is so needful as this Salvation,—Salvation ? Fie upon this foolish world, that would give so little for Salvation ! O if there were a free market of Salvation proclaimed in that day when the trumpet of God shall awake the dead, how many buyers would there be then ! God send me no more happiness, but that Salvation which the blind world (to their eternal woe) letteth slip through their fingers ! God saith to them, (*Isa* l. 11,) “ This shall ye have at

my hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow." And truly this is as ill-made a bed to lie upon, as one could wish : for he cannot sleep soundly, nor rest quietly, who hath sorrow for his pillow. Rouse, rouse up therefore your soul ; and ask how CHRIST and your soul met together. I am sure they never got CHRIST, who were not once sick at the heart for him. Too, too many *whole* souls think they have met with CHRIST, who had never a wearied night for the want of him. But, alas, what richer are men, because they dreamed the last night that they had much gold, and, when they awoke in the morning, they found it was but a dream ? What are all the sinners in the world, in that day when heaven and earth shall go up in a flame of fire, but a number of beguiled dreamers ? Every one shall say of his hunting and his conquest, " Behold, it was a dream." Every man in that day will tell his dream. I beseech you in the LORD JESUS, beware, beware of unsound work in the matter of your salvation : ye may not, ye cannot, be safe without CHRIST. This day strike hands with CHRIST, that there may be no happiness to you but CHRIST, no hunting for any thing but CHRIST, no bed at night (when death cometh) but CHRIST. I know this much of CHRIST, He is not ill to be found, nor lordly of his love. Woe had been my portion for evermore, if CHRIST had made a dainty of himself to me : but, GOD be thanked, I gave nothing for CHRIST ; and now, I protest before men and angels, CHRIST cannot be exchanged, CHRIST cannot be sold, CHRIST cannot be weighed. Where would angels, or all the world, find a balance to weigh him in ? All lovers, blush when ye stand beside CHRIST ! Woe upon all love, but the love of CHRIST ; shame, for evermore, be upon all other glory ! I cry, Death upon all lives, but the life of CHRIST ! O what is it that holdeth us asunder ! O that once we could have a fair meeting ! Thus, recommending CHRIST to you, and you to Him for evermore, I rest. Grace be with you !

Yours in JESUS,

Aberdeen, 1637.

S. R.

TO JOHN KENNEDY, BAILLIE OF AYR.

WORTHY SIR,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be unto you! Your not writing to me cannot bind me up from remembering you, that at least ye may be a witness, to behold in paper what is betwixt CHRIST and me. I was like a young orphan, cast out in the open fields; and either CHRIST behoved to take me up, and bring me home to his house, or I had died in the fields. And now I think the house mine own, and the Master of the house mine also. CHRIST inquired not, when he began to love me, whether I was fair, or black, or sun-burnt? Love taketh what it may have. He loved me before this time, I know: his love is come to a fair bloom, like a young rose opened out of the green leaves, and it casteth a strong and fragrant smell. I want nothing but ways of expressing CHRIST's love: a full vessel would have a vent. O that I could cast out coals, to make a fire in many breasts! Oh! it is a pity that there were not many imprisoned for CHRIST, for no other purpose but to write songs of the love of CHRIST. This love would keep all created tongues in exercise, and busy night and day, to speak of it. Alas! I can speak nothing of it; but I wonder at three things in his love.—First, Its *freedom*. O that lumps of sin should get such love for nothing!—Secondly, The *sweetness* of his love. Those that feel it may bear witness what it is: it is so sweet, that, next to CHRIST himself, nothing can match it. A soul could live eternally blessed only on CHRIST's love, and feed upon no other thing.—And, Thirdly, What *power* and *strength* are in his love! I am persuaded it can climb a steep hill, with hell upon its back; and swim through water, and not drown; and sing in the fire, and feel no pain; and triumph in losses, prisons, sorrows, exile, or disgrace; and laugh and rejoice in death. O for a year's lease of the sense of his love without a cloud! O for the coming of the Bridegroom! O when shall I see the Bride-

groom and the Bride meet in the clouds! O when shall we get our hearts'-fill of that love! O that it were lawful to complain of the famine and want of that immediate vision of GOD! O time, time, how dost thou torment the souls of those that would be swallowed up of CHRIST's love, because thou movest so slowly! O that he would pity a poor prisoner, and give me a taste, or draught, of that surpassing sweetness, (which is glory begun,) to be a confirmation, that CHRIST and I shall enjoy each other for ever! Come hither, O love of CHRIST, that I may once possess thee before I die! What would I not give, to have time, which lieth betwixt CHRIST and me, taken out of the way, that we might once meet? I cannot think but that, at the first sight I shall see of that most lovely face, love shall come out of his eyes, and fill me with astonishment. I would but desire to stand at the outer side of the gates of the New Jerusalem, and look through a hole of the door, and see CHRIST's face. It is not for nothing that it is said, (*Col. i. 27*), "CHRIST in you the hope of glory." CHRIST, possessed by faith here, is young heaven, and glory in the bud. If I had that pledge, I would endure hell, rather than give it again. Should not we, young children, long and look for the expiring of our minority? It were good to be daily begging the SAVIOUR's favours, and, if we can do no more, seek crumbs of CHRIST's love, to keep up our taste of heaven, until supper-time. I know, it is far after noon, and nigh the marriage-supper of the LAMB; the table is covered already. O Well-beloved, run, run fast! O fair day, when wilt thou dawn! O shadows, flee away! It is a pain to wait; but hope that maketh not ashamed swalloweth up that pain. It is not unkindness that keepeth CHRIST and us so long asunder. What can I say to CHRIST's love? I think more than I can say. To consider, that when my LORD JESUS might take the air (if I may so speak) and go abroad, yet he will keep the prison with me! But, in all this sweet communion with him, what am I to be thanked for? Whether I will or not, he will be kind to me, as if he had defied my

guiltiness to make him unkind. Here I die with wondering, that justice hindereth not love ; for there are none in hell, nor out of hell, more unworthy of CHRIST's love. It would seem to become me rather to run away from his love, as ashamed at my own unworthiness. Nay, I may think shame to take heaven, who have so highly provoked my LORD JESUS : but seeing CHRIST's love will shame me, I am content to be ashamed. My desire is, that my LORD would give me broader and deeper thoughts, to feed myself with wondering at his love. I wish I could weigh it, but I have no balance for it. When I have worn my tongue to the stump in praising CHRIST, I have done nothing to him ; I must let him alone, for my withered arms will not go about his high, wide, long, and broad love. What remaineth then, but that my debt to the love of CHRIST lie unpaid to all eternity ? O if this land and nation would come and stand before his inconceivable and glorious perfections, and look, and love, and wonder, and adore ! Would to God that I could bring in many lovers to CHRIST's house ! But this nation hath " forsaken the fountain of living waters." LORD, cast not water on Scotland's coal ! Woe, woe, will be to this land, because of the day of the LORD's fierce anger, that is so fast coming ! Grace be with you !

Your affectionate brother in our LORD JESUS,

Aberdeen.

S. R.



TO THE LADY BOYD.

My very honourable and Christian Lady,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you ! I received your letter, and am well pleased that your thoughts of CHRIST stay with you, and that your purpose still is, by all means, to take the kingdom of heaven by violence ; and it is a degree of watchfulness, and thankfulness also, to observe sleepiness and unthankfulness. We have all good cause to complain of false light, that playeth the thief, and stealeth

away the lantern ; when it cometh to constant walking with God, our journey is ten times a-day broken. CHRIST getteth only broken work of us ; and, alas ! too often against the hair. I have been somewhat nearer the LORD ; but when I draw nigh, and see my vileness, for shame I would be out of his presence again ; but yet desire of his soul-refreshing love putteth me under an arrest. O what am I, so slothful a burden of sin, to stand beside such a holy LORD, such a high and lofty One, who inhabiteth eternity ! But, since it pleaseth CHRIST to condescend to such a one as me, let shamefacedness be laid aside, and lose itself in his condescending love. O that I were at yonder end of my weak designs ! Then should I be where CHRIST my LORD lives and reigns ; there I should be everlastingly solaced with the sight of his face, and satisfied with the surpassing sweetness of his love. But truly now I stand in the nether side of my desires ; and, with a drooping head, and panting heart, I look up to JESUS, standing afar off from us, until corruption and death shall scour and refine the body of clay. In the mean time, we are blessed in sending word to the Beloved, that we love him ; and till then there is joy in seeking him, in lying about his house, looking in at the windows, and sending a poor soul's groans and wishes through a hole of the door to JESUS, till God send a glad meeting. And blessed be God, that after a low ebb, and so sad a word, " LORD JESUS, it is long since I saw thee ; " that, even then, our wings are growing, and the absence of JESUS breedeth new desires and longings for him. I know that no man hath a velvet cross ; but the cross is made of that which God will have it. Let my LORD JESUS weave my span-length of time with white and black ; and let the rose be neighboured with the thorn ; yet hope, that maketh not ashamed, hath written a letter of hope to the mourners in Zion, that it shall not be long so. When we are over the water, CHRIST shall cry down crosses, and up heaven for evermore. In this hope, I sleep quietly in CHRIST's bosom, till He come, who is not slack ; and would sleep so, were

it not that the noise of the Devil's and sin's feet, and the cries of an unbelieving heart, awaken me; but for the present I have nothing whereof I can accuse CHRIST's cross. O that I could please myself in CHRIST only! If the fruit of your Ladyship's womb be helpers of CHRIST, ye have good ground to rejoice in GOD. All your Ladyship can expect for your good-will to me and my brother, is the prayers of a prisoner of JESUS, to whom I recommend your Ladyship and children, and in whom I am,

Aberdeen,
Sept. 8, 1637.

Madam, your Ladyship's in CHRIST,
S. R.



TO JONET KENNEDY.

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be unto you! Ye are not a little obliged to the rich grace of Him, who hath separated you for himself, and for the promised inheritance with the saints in light, from this condemned world. Hold fast CHRIST; contend for him; it is not possible to keep CHRIST peaceably, having once gotten him, except the Devil were dead. It must be your resolution, to set your face against SATAN's storms. Nature would have heaven come to us sleeping in our beds. We would all buy CHRIST, if we might make the price ourselves; but CHRIST is worth more blood and lives than either you or I have to give him. When we shall come home, when our heads shall find the weight of the eternal crown of glory, and when we shall look back to pains and sufferings, then we shall see life and sorrow to be less than one step from a prison to glory, and that our little inch of suffering is not worthy of our first night's welcome to heaven. O thrice blinded souls, whose hearts are charmed and bewitched with the dreams and shadows of a miserable life of sin! Shame on us, who sit still, fettered with the love of the loan of 'a piece of dead clay! O poor fools, who are beguiled with painted things, and this world's fair weather and smooth promises! May not

the Devil laugh, to see us give out our souls, and get in but the corrupt and counterfeit pleasures of sin? O for a sight of eternity's glory, and a little taste of the LAMB's marriage-supper! A drop of the wine of consolations, that is in our banqueting-house, out of CHRIST's own hand, would make us loathe the sour drink of a miserable life. O how far are we bereft of wit,—to run, till our souls be out of breath, after a happiness of our own making! O that we were out of ourselves, and dead to this world, and this world dead and crucified to us! And when we should be out of love of any masked lover whatsoever, then CHRIST would be our night-song and our morning-song; then the very noise of our Well-beloved's feet when he cometh, and his first knock at the door, would be as the news of two heavens to us. O that our eyes, and our soul's smelling, should go after a blasted and sun-burnt flower, even this fair-plastered, outside world; and have neither eye nor smell for the flower of JESSE, for the choicest, the fairest, the sweetest rose that ever GOD planted! O let some of us die to feel the fragrance of him; and let my part of this rotten world be forfeited and sold for evermore, providing I may anchor my tottering soul upon CHRIST! I know that it is sometimes at this, "LORD, what wilt thou have for CHRIST?" But, O LORD, can CHRIST be sold? Or, rather, May not a poor prisoner have him for nothing? If I can get no more, O let me be pained to all eternity with longing for him! The joy of hungering for CHRIST should be my heaven for evermore. Alas! that I cannot draw souls and CHRIST together! But I desire the coming of his kingdom, and that CHRIST would come upon withered Scotland, as rain upon the new-mown grass. O let the King come! Grace, grace be with you!

Yours in his worthy LORD JESUS,

Aberdeen, 1637.

S. R.

TO MARGARET REID.

My very dear and worthy Sister,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you! Ye are truly blessed of the LORD, however a sour world gloom upon you, if ye continue in the faith, grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel. It is good that there is a heaven, and that it is not a night-dream, or a fancy. It is a wonder that men deny not that there is a heaven; as they deny that there is a way to it, but of men's making. You have learned of CHRIST, that there is a heaven; contend for it, and contend for CHRIST; bear well the hard cross of this step-mother world, that God will not have to be yours. I confess, it is hard, and I would I were able to ease you of your burden; but, believe me, this world is but the dross, the refuse, and the scum of God's creation; a hard bone cast to the dogs, whereon they rather break their teeth, than satisfy their appetite. It is your Father's blessing, and CHRIST's birth-right, that our LORD is keeping for you; and your seed also shall inherit the earth, (if that be good for them,) for that is promised to them; and God's bond is as good, and better, than if men would give every one of them a bond for thousands. Crosses in number, measure, and weight, have been written for you; and your LORD will lead you through them. Make CHRIST sure, and the blessings of the earth shall be at CHRIST's back. I see many professors, but they are professors of glass; a little knock of persecution breaks them in pieces: therefore make fast work; see that CHRIST lay the ground-stone of your profession; for wind and rain will not wash away his building. His works stand for evermore. I should twenty times have perished in my affliction, if I had not leaned my weak back, and laid my pressing burden, upon the Foundation-stone, the Corner-stone laid in Zion; and I desire never to rise from this stone. Now, the very God

of peace confirm and establish you unto the day of the blessed appearance of CHRIST JESUS. GOD be with you!

Yours in his LORD JESUS,

Aberdeen.

S. R.



TO JOHN STEWART, PROVOST OF AYR,

Now in Ireland.

MUCH HONOURED SIR,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be unto you! I long to hear from you; being now removed from my flock, and the prisoner of CHRIST at Aberdeen. I would not have you think it strange, that your journey to New-England hath gotten such a dash. It indeed hath made my heart heavy; yet I know it is no dumb Providence, but a speaking one, whereby our LORD speaketh his mind to you, though for the present ye do not well understand what he saith. However it be, He who sitteth upon the floods hath shown you his marvellous kindness in the great deeps. I know your loss is great, and your hope is gone far against you; but I entreat you, Sir, expound aright our LORD's laying hinderances in the way. I persuade myself that your heart aimeth at the footsteps of the flock, and to dwell beside him whom your soul loveth; and that it is your desire to remain in the wilderness, where the woman is kept from the dragon. And this being your desire, remember that a poor prisoner of CHRIST said, "That miscarried journey is pregnant with mercy and consolation, and shall bring forth a fair birth." Wait on: "he that believeth maketh not haste." (*Isa. xxviii. 16.*) I hope ye have been asking what the LORD meaneth, and what further may be his will. My dear Brother, let GOD make of you what he will. He will end all with consolation, and shall make glory out of your sufferings; and would you wish better work? This water

was in your way to heaven ; ye behoved to cross it ; and therefore embrace his wise and unerring Providence. Let not the censures of men, who see but the outside of things, (and scarcely that well,) abate your rejoicing in the LORD. Although your faith sees but the black side of Providence, yet it hath a better side ; and GOD shall let you see it. If our LORD ride upon a straw, his horse shall neither stumble nor fall. "For we know that all things work together for good to them that love GOD : " Therefore, shipwreck, losses, &c., work together for the good of them that love GOD. Hence I infer, that losses, disappointments, ill tongues, and loss of friends, houses, or country, are GOD's workmen, still at work, to work out good to you out of every thing that befalleth you. Let not the LORD's dealing seem harsh, rough, or unfatherly, because it is unpleasant. When the LORD's blessed will bloweth cross to your desires, it is best in humility to strike sail to him, and to be willing to be led in any way our LORD pleaseth. It is a point of denial of yourself, to be as if you had not a will, but had sold it over to him ; and to make use of his will for your own, is both true holiness, and your ease and peace. Ye know not what the LORD is working out of this ; but ye shall know it hereafter. Now, for myself, I was three days before the High-Commission, and accused of preaching treason against our King. A Minister, being witness, went well nigh to swear it. And, they have (1.) deprived me of my ministry ; (2.) silenced me, requiring that I exercise no part of the ministerial function within this kingdom, under the pain of rebellion ; (3.) confined my person within the town of Aberdeen,—where I find the Ministers working for my confinement in Caithness or Orkney, far from them, because some people here resort to me. My adversaries know not what a courtier I am now with my Royal King. It is but our soft and lazy flesh that hath raised an ill report of the cross of CHRIST. Sweet is his yoke ; CHRIST's chains are of pure gold ; sufferings for him are perfumed. I would not give my weeping for the

laughing of all the fourteen Prelates ; I would not exchange my sadness with the world's joy.

Yours in our LORD JESUS,

Aberdeen, 1637.

S. R.



TO JOHN STEWART, PROVOST OF AYR.

Much honoured, and dearest in CHRIST ;

GRACE, mercy, and peace, from GOD our FATHER, and from our LORD JESUS CHRIST, be upon you ! My closed mouth, my dumb sabbaths, and the memory of my communion with CHRIST, in many fair, fair days in Anwoth, (whereas now my Master getteth no service of my tongue,) have almost broken my faith in two halves ; yet, in my deepest apprehensions of his anger, I see through a cloud that I am wrong. The LORD is equal in all his ways ; but my guiltiness often over-mastereth my believing. I have not been well known ; for, except as to open out-breakings, I want nothing of what JUDAS and CAIN had ;—only He hath been pleased to prevent me in mercy, and to cast me into a fever of love for himself ; and besides he hath visited my soul, and watered it with his comforts. But yet I have not that real and felt possession which I would have ; I know CHRIST pitieth me in this. The great men, my friends, are dried up, like winter-brooks of water : all say, “ No dealing for that man ; his best way will be, to be gone out of the kingdom : ” So I see they tire of me. But, believe me, I am most gladly content that CHRIST breaketh all my idols in pieces ; it hath put a new edge upon my blunted love to CHRIST ; I see he is jealous of my love, and will have all to himself. In a word, the following things are my burthen.—1. I am not in the vineyard as others are : it may be, because CHRIST thinketh me a withered tree ; but GOD forbid !—2. Woe, woe, woe is coming upon my harlot mother, this apostate Kirk. The time is coming, when we shall wish for doves' wings, to

fly and hide us. Oh for the desolation of this land!—
 3. I see my Master, CHRIST, going alone, as it were mourning in sackcloth. His fainting friends fear that JESUS shall lose the field; but he must carry the day.—
 4. My guiltiness and the sins of my youth are come up against me, and they would come in as deserving causes of God's justice; but I pray God, for CHRIST's sake, that he will never give them that room.—5. Woe is me, that I cannot get the glorious Prince of the Kings of the earth set on high! Sir, ye may help me and pity me in this, and bow your knee, and bless his name, and desire others to do it, that he hath been pleased in my sufferings to make atheists, papists, and enemies about me, say, "God is with this prisoner." Let hell, and the powers of hell, (I care not,) be let loose against me to do their worst, so that CHRIST, and my FATHER and his FATHER, may be magnified in my sufferings.—Sir, write to me; and commend me to your wife. Mercy be her portion! Grace be with you!

Yours in his LORD JESUS,

Aberdeen, 1637.

S. R.



TO THE LADY BUSBIE

MADAM,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you! I am glad to hear that CHRIST and ye are one; and that ye have made him your one thing, where many are painfully toiled in seeking many things, and their many things are nothing. It is best that ye should set yourself apart, as a thing laid up for CHRIST alone. He hath been going about you these many years, by afflictions, to engage you to himself;—it were a pity and a loss to say him nay. Verily I could wish that I could swim through hell, and all the ill weather in the world, with CHRIST in my arms; but it is my evil and folly, that, except CHRIST come unsent for, I dare not go to seek him. Think well of the visitations

of your LORD : for I find one thing, which I saw not well before, that when we are under trials, little sins raise great cries in the conscience ; whereas in prosperity, conscience is a Pope, to give dispensations, and let out and in, and give latitude and elbow-room to our heart. O how little care we for pardon at CHRIST's hand, when we make dispensations ! And all is but children's play, till a cross without beget a heavier cross within, and then we play no longer with our idols. It is good still to be severe against ourselves ; for else we but transform God's mercy into an idol, and an idol that hath a dispensation to give for turning the grace of God into wantonness. O CHRIST hath a saving eye ! Salvation is in his eye-lids. When he first looked on me, I was saved ; it cost him but a look to make hell quit of me. O, free merits, and the precious blood of God ! What a safe and sure way is it, to come out of hell leaning on the SAVIOUR ! That CHRIST and a sinner should be one, and have heaven betwixt them, is the wonder of salvation. What an excellent fragrance doth CHRIST cast on his lower garden, where there grow but wild flowers, if we speak by way of comparison ! But there is nothing but perfect garden-flowers in heaven. We are all obliged to love heaven for CHRIST's sake. He graceth heaven and all his Father's house with his presence. He is the rose that beautifieth all the upper garden of God ; a leaf of that rose of God, for fragrance, is worth a world. O that he would blow his fragrance upon a withered and dead soul ! Let us then go on to meet him, and to be filled with the sweetness of his love. Nothing will hold him from us ; he hath decreed to put time, sin, hell, devils, men, and death out of the way, and to rid the rough way betwixt us and him, that we may enjoy one another. It is wonderful, that he would have the company of sinners to delight himself with in heaven. And now the supper is waiting for us. CHRIST the Bridegroom is waiting with desire, till the Bride, the LAMB's wife, be ready for the marriage. O fools, what do we here ? And why sit we still ? Why sleep we in the prison ? Were it not best to

make us wings, to fly up to our blessed LORD, and our fellow-friends? GOD give you to find mercy in that day of our LORD JESUS, to whose saving grace I recommend you.

Yours in our LORD JESUS,

Aberdeen, 1637.

S. R.



TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD LOUDOUN.

RIGHT HONOURABLE :

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to your Lordship! I rejoice exceedingly, that I hear your Lordship hath a good mind to CHRIST, and his truth. My very dear Lord, go on, in the strength of the LORD, to carry your honour and worldly glory to the New Jerusalem. For this cause your Lordship received these of the LORD; and this is a sure way for the establishment of your house, if ye be one of those who are willing in your place to build Zion's waste places. Your Lordship wanteth not GOD's and man's law both: but suppose the bastard laws of man were against you, it is an honest error, if here ye slip against a point of standing policy. O what a blessed thing is it, to see nobility, learning, and sanctification, all concur in one! For these ye owe yourself to CHRIST and his kingdom. GOD hath bewildered the wit and the learning of the scribes and disputers, this time; they look asquint to the Bible: this world blindfoldeth men's light, that they are afraid to see straight before them. Your Lordship knoweth, that within a little while, policy against truth will blush, and the works of men will burn. How have men forgotten the LORD, that they dare go against even that truth which once they preached themselves, although their sermons now be as thin sown as strawberries in a wood? Certainly the safest course is, for the short time of this world, to stand for JESUS. He hath said it, and it is our part to believe it, that, ere it be long, "time shall be no more," and "the heavens shall wax old as a

garment." Do we not see it already an old, thread-bare garment? Doth not cripple and lame nature tell us, that the LORD will fold up the old garment, and lay it aside; and that the heavens shall be folded together as a scroll, and this pest-house shall be burnt with fire, and shall melt with fervent heat? For, at the LORD's coming, he will do with this earth, as men do with a leper-house; he will burn the walls with fire, and the furniture of the house also. (2 *Peter* iii. 10, 12.) My very dear Lord, how shall ye rejoice in that day, to have CHRIST, angels, heaven, and your own conscience, smiling upon you? I am persuaded that one sick night, through the terrors of the Almighty, would make men (whose conscience hath such a wide throat) have other thoughts of CHRIST and his worship than those with which now they please themselves. The scarcity of faith in the earth saith that we are hard upon the last nick of time: blessed are those who keep their garments clean against the Bridegroom's coming. There shall be spotted clothes, and many defiled garments, at his last coming; and therefore few found worthy to walk with him in white. The weak and feeble, these that are as signs and wonders in Israel, have chosen the best side. Verily, for myself, I am so well pleased with CHRIST and his cross, that I should weep if it should come to bartering of condition with those that are at ease in Zion. I hold still to my choice, and bless myself in it. I see, and I believe, that there is salvation in this way that is every where spoken against. I hope to face eternity, and to venture even upon death, fully persuaded, that this only, even this, is the saving way for racked consciences, and for weary and laden sinners, to find ease and peace for evermore. Now the very GOD of peace establish your Lordship in, CHRIST JESUS unto the end!

Aberdeen,
Sept. 10, 1637.

Your Lordship's in JESUS,
S. R.

TO ALEXANDER GORDON, OF EARLSTOUN.

MUCH HONOURED SIR,

SEEING our LORD hath been pleased to break the snare of your adversaries, I heartily bless our LORD on your behalf. Our crosses for CHRIST are not made of iron; they are of more gentle metal. It is easy for God to make a fool of the Devil, the father of all fools. I know your LORD hath something to do with you, because SATAN and malice have shot sore at you; but your bow abideth in its strength: let CHRIST have all the glory. I see that CHRIST can borrow a cross for some hours, and set his servants beside it, rather than under it, and make glory to himself, and shame to his enemies, and comfort to his children, out of it: But whether CHRIST buy or borrow crosses, he is King of crosses, and King of devils, and King over hell, and King over malice. When he was in the grave, he came out, and brought the keys with him. He is lord-gaoler. Nay, what say I? He is Captain of the castle, and he hath the keys of death and hell. And what are our troubles but little deaths? And He who commandeth the great castle, commandeth the little also.—2. I see that a hardened face, and two skins upon our brows, against the winter-hail and stormy wind, are meetest for a poor traveller, in a winter-journey to heaven. O what art is it to learn to endure hardness, and to learn to go barefooted, either through the Devil's fiery coals, or his frozen waters?—3. I am persuaded, that a sea-venture with CHRIST maketh great riches. Is not our King JESUS's ship coming home, and shall not we get part of the gold? Alas, we fools miscount our gain, when we seem losers. "To you it is given to suffer." O what fools are we, to undervalue his gifts! If we be faithful, our tackling shall not loose, nor our mast break, nor our sails blow into the sea. The bastard crosses, the base-born crosses, of worldlings for evil-doing, must be heavy and grievous; but our afflictions are light.—4. I am happy that my salvation is

credited to CHRIST's mediation. CHRIST oweth no faith to me; but O what faith and credit I owe to him! Let my name fall, and let CHRIST's name stand in honour with men and angels.—5. I wondered once at Providence; and called white Providence black and unjust, that I should be smothered in a town where no soul will take CHRIST from my hand. But Providence hath another lustre with GOD, than with my bleared eyes. I proclaim myself a blind body, who know not black and white in the uncouth course of GOD's Providence. Suppose CHRIST would set hell where heaven is, and Devils up in glory, beside the elect Angels, (which yet cannot be,) I would I had a heart to acquiesce in his way, without further dispute. I see that infinite wisdom is the mother of his judgments, and his ways are past finding out.—6. I cannot learn, but I desire to learn, to bring my thoughts, will, and desires, under CHRIST's feet, that he may trample upon them: but, alas! I am still upon CHRIST's wrong side. Grace be with you!

Aberdeen,
Sept. 12, 1637.

Yours in JESUS,
S. R.



TO MARION MACKNAUGHT.

Dearest in our LORD JESUS:

COUNT it your honour, that CHRIST hath begun at you, to fine you first. "Fear not," saith the Amen, the true and faithful Witness. As my Master liveth, continue in prayer and in watching, and your glorious deliverance is coming; CHRIST is not far off. A straw for all the bits of clay that are risen against us! "Ye shall thresh the mountains, and fan them like chaff." (*Isa. xli.*) If ye slack your hands at your meetings, and your watching to prayer, then it would seem our Rock hath sold us; but be diligent, and be not discouraged. I charge you in CHRIST, rejoice, give thanks, believe, be strong in the LORD. That

burning bush in Galloway shall not be burned to ashes ; for the LORD is in the bush. Be not discouraged, that banishment is to be procured against me : the earth is the LORD's ; and I am filled with his love, and running over. I rejoice to hear that ye are in your journey : such news as I hear of all your faith and love, rejoices my sad heart. Pray for me, for they seek my hurt ; but I give myself to prayer. The blessing of my LORD, and that of a Prisoner of CHRIST, be with you ! O chosen and greatly beloved woman, faint not : Fie, fie ! if ye faint now, ye lose a good cause. Double your meetings : cease not for Zion's sake, hold not your peace, till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.

Yours in CHRIST JESUS his LORD,

Aberdeen, 1637.

S. R.



TO MR. GEORGE DUMBAR.

Reverend and dearly beloved in the LORD :

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you ! Because your words have strengthened many, I was silent, expecting some lines from you in my bonds ; and this is the cause why I wrote not to you : but now I am forced to speak. I never believed, till now, that there was so much to be found in CHRIST, on this side of death and of heaven. O the ravishments of heavenly joy that may be had here, in the small gleanings and comforts that fall from CHRIST ! What fools are we, who know not, and consider not the weight that is in the very earnest-penny, and the first-fruits of our hoped-for harvest ! O what then must personal possession be ! I see that my prison hath neither lock nor door ; I am free in my bonds ; and my chains are made of rotten straw ; they shall not abide one pull of faith. I am sure they in hell would exchange their torments with our crosses, suppose they should never be delivered ; and would give twenty thousand years' torment

to boot, to be in our bonds for ever: And therefore we wrong CHRIST, who sigh, and fear, and doubt, and despond in them. Our sufferings are washed in CHRIST's blood, as well as our souls; for CHRIST's merits bought a blessing on the crosses of the sons of GOD. Our troubles owe us a free passage through them: Devils and men, and crosses, are our debtors; death and all storms are our debtors, to blow our poor tossed bark over the water freight-free, and to set the travellers in their own known ground; and our sufferings are the ruin of the black kingdom. But withal, we stand with the "hundred forty and four thousand," who are with the LAMB upon the top of Mount Zion: Antichrist and his followers are down in the valley; we have the advantage of the hill; our temptations are always beneath; our waters are beneath our breath; "as dying, and behold we live." I bless the LORD, that all our troubles come through CHRIST's fingers, and that he casteth in some ounce-weights of heaven, and of the spirit of glory, (which resteth on suffering believers,) into our cup, in which there is no taste of hell. My dear Brother, ye know all these better than I; I send water to the sea, to speak of these things to you; but it easeth me to desire you to help me to pay tribute of praise to JESUS. O what praises I owe him! I would I were in my free heritage, that I might begin to pay my debts to JESUS. I entreat for your prayers and praises: I forget not you.

Your brother and fellow-sufferer, in and for CHRIST,

Aberdeen,
Sept. 17, 1637.

S. R.



TO THE PROFESSORS OF CHRIST IN IRELAND.

DEARLY beloved in our LORD, and partakers of the heavenly calling. Grace, mercy, and peace, be to you, from GOD our FATHER, and from our LORD JESUS

CHRIST! I always, but most of all now in my bonds, (most sweet bonds for CHRIST my LORD,) rejoice to hear of your faith and love, and to hear that our King, our well-beloved, our spiritual Bridegroom, without tiring, stayeth still to woo you as his Bride; and that persecutions and mockings of sinners have not chased away the wooer from the house. My salvation on it, (if ten heavens were mine,) if this way that I now suffer for, this way that the world reproacheth, and no other way, be not the King's gate to heaven; and I shall never see God's face, if this be not the only saving way to heaven. O that you would take the word of a prisoner of CHRIST for it! Nay, I know you have the greatest King's word for it, that it shall not be your wisdom to seek another CHRIST, or another way of worshipping him, than is now savingly revealed to you. Therefore, though I never saw your faces, let me be pardoned for writing to you, ye faithful pastors yet amongst the flocks, and ye sincere professors of CHRIST's truth, or any weak and tired strayers, who cast an eye after the Saviour, if possibly I may confirm and strengthen you in this good way, every where spoken against. I can with greatest assurance (to the honour of our LORD let it be spoken) assert, though I be but a child in CHRIST, and the meanest, and less than the least of saints, that we do not come nigh to the due love and estimation of that fairest among the sons of men. He is all heaven, and more than all heaven: and my testimony of him is, that ten lives of black sorrow, ten deaths, ten hells of pain, ten furnaces of brimstone, were all too little for CHRIST, if our sufferings could be a hire to buy him. Therefore faint not in your sufferings and hazards for him. I proclaim and cry, Hell, sorrow, and shame upon all lusts, upon all by-lovers, that would take CHRIST's room over his head, in this little inch of love of these narrow souls of ours! O highest, O fairest, O dearest LORD JESUS, take thine own from all rival lovers. O that we could sell all our part of time's glory, and time's good things, for a lease of CHRIST for all eternity! O how are we

misled and polluted with the love of things that are on this side of time, and on this side of death's water! Where can we find a match to CHRIST, among created things? I know that his sackcloth and ashes are better than the fool's laughter, which is like the crackling of thorns under a pot. But, alas! we do not harden our faces against the cold north-storms, which blow upon CHRIST's face; we love well summer-religion, and to be that which sin hath made us, even as thin-skinned as if we were made of white paper, and would fain be carried to heaven in a covered chariot, wishing from our hearts that CHRIST would give us surety for nothing but a fair summer, until we be landed at heaven's gate. How many of us have been here deceived, and fainted in the day of trial? Amongst you there are some of this stamp. And now I am persuaded, it will be asked of every one of us, on what terms we keep CHRIST. We found CHRIST without a wet foot; and he, and his Gospel, came upon small charges to our doors; but now we must wet our feet to seek him. O how rare a thing is it to be loyal to CHRIST, when he hath a controversy with the shields of the earth! I wish all of you would consider, that this trial is from CHRIST; it is come upon you unbought; (indeed, when we buy a temptation with our own money, no marvel if we be not easily free of it, and if God be not at our elbow to take it off our hand;) this is CHRIST's ordinary house-fare, of which he makes use, in order to try all the vessels of his house withal; and CHRIST now is about to bring his treasure out before sun and moon, and to tell his money, and in the telling, to try what weight of gold, and what weight of copper, is in his house. Do not now bow, or yield to your adversaries an hair-breadth: CHRIST and his truth will not divide; and his truth hath not latitude, that ye may take some of it, and leave other some of it. Nay, the Gospel is like a small hair, that hath no breadth, and will not cleave in two. It is not possible to twist and compound a matter between CHRIST and Antichrist; and therefore you must either be for CHRIST, or ye must be

against him. O that this misled and blind-folded world would see, that CHRIST doth not rise and fall by men's apprehensions! What is CHRIST the lighter, because men do with him, by open proclamation, as men do with clipped and light money? They are now crying down CHRIST; and they will have him taken for a penny or a pound, for one or for a hundred, according as the wind bloweth from the East or from the West. But the LORD hath weighed him, and balanced him already: "This is my beloved SON, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him:" his worth and his weight are the same still. It is our part to cry, "Up, up with CHRIST; and down, down with all created glory before him!" O that I could heighten him, and heighten his name, and heighten his throne! I know that death and hell, and the world and tortures, shall all cleave and split in twain, and give us free passage to go through; and we shall bring all God's good metal out of the furnace again, and leave behind us nothing but our dross and our scum. We may, then, before-hand proclaim CHRIST to be victorious. He is crowned King in Mount Zion; GOD did put the crown upon his head, (*Psal. ii.*) and who dare take it off again? Out of question, he hath sore and grievous quarrels against his church; and therefore he is called, (*Isa. xxxi. 9.*) "He whose fire is in Zion, and whose furnace is in Jerusalem." But, when he hath performed his work on Mount Zion, all Zion's haters shall be as the hungry and thirsty man, that dreams he is eating and drinking, and behold, when he awaketh, he is faint, and his soul empty. And this advantage we have also, that he will not bring before sun and moon all the infirmities of his church. Our kind LORD will not come with chiding to the streets, to let all the world hear what is betwixt him and us. Two special things ye are to mind:—1. Try and make sure your profession, that ye carry not empty lamps. Alas, security, security, is the bane and the wreck of the most part of the world! O how many professors go with a golden lustre before men, and yet are bastard and base metal! Consider how fair

before the wind some do ply, and yet in a short time such are quickly broken upon the rocks, and never fetch the harbour, but are sanded in the bottom of hell. O make your heaven sure, and try how ye come by conversion; that it be not stolen goods, in a white well-lustred profession; a white skin over old wounds. A fault under water, not seen, is dangerous; and so is a leak in the bottom of an enlightened conscience, often falling, and sinning against light. Woe, woe is me, that the holy profession of CHRIST is made a stage-garment by many, to bring home a vain fame; and CHRIST is made to serve men's ends! This is, as it were, to stop an oven with a King's robes.—Know, 2, Except men martyr and slay the body of sin, in sanctified self-denial, they shall never be CHRIST's martyrs and faithful witnesses. O if I could be master of that house-idol, *myself, my own, mine*,—my own will, wit, credit, and ease,—how blessed were I! We need to be redeemed from ourselves, rather than from the Devil and the world! Learn to put out yourselves, and to put in CHRIST for yourselves. I should make a sweet bartering, if I could substitute CHRIST in place of myself; so as to say, “Not I, but CHRIST; not my will but CHRIST's; not my ease, not my credit, but CHRIST, CHRIST.” O that CHRIST had the full place of myself; that all my aims, purposes, thoughts, and desires, would land upon CHRIST, and not upon myself! Let never dew lie upon my branches, and let my poor flower wither at the root, so that CHRIST were enthroned, and his glory advanced in all the world, and especially in these three kingdoms. But I know he hath no need of me; what can I add to him? But O that he would cause his high and pure glory to run through such a foul channel as I am! And although he hath caused the blossom to fall off my one poor joy, that was on this side of heaven, even my liberty to preach CHRIST to his people; yet I am dead to that now, so that he would hew and carve glory, glory for evermore, to my royal King, out of my sufferings. O that I had my fill of his love! I entreat you earnestly for the

aid of your prayers, for I forget not you; and I salute with my soul the faithful Pastors, and honourable and worthy professors, in that land. "Now the God of peace, that brought again our LORD JESUS from the dead, the great Shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the everlasting Covenant, make you perfect in every good work, to do his will; working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight!" Grace, grace be with you!

Yours in JESUS,

Aberdeen,
Feb. 4, 1638.

S. R.



TO HIS REVEREND AND MUCH-HONOURED BROTHER,

DR. ALEXANDER LIGHTON,

Prisoner at London.

Reverend and much-honoured Prisoner of Hope,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you! It was not my part, whom our LORD hath enlarged, to forget you his prisoner. When I consider how long your night hath been, I think CHRIST hath a mind to put you in free grace's debt so much the deeper. But what if CHRIST intend for you no joy but public joy, with enlarged and triumphant Zion? I think, Sir, ye would love best to share and divide your song of joy with Zion, and to have mystical CHRIST in Britain co-partner with your enlargement. Worthy Sir, I hope I need not exhort you to go on, hoping for the salvation of God. There hath not been so much taken from your time of ease, as eternity shall add to your heaven. Ye know, when one day in heaven hath paid, yea, and over-paid your blood, bonds, sorrow, and sufferings, that it would trouble an angel's understanding to count that overplus of glory, which eternity can and will give you. Your sand-glass of sufferings and losses cometh to little, when compared with the glory that waiteth for you, on the other side of the water! Ye

have no leisure to rejoice and sing here, while time 'goeth about you, and where your psalms must be short ; therefore ye will think eternity, and the long day of heaven, that shall be measured with no other sun than the long life of the ANCIENT OF DAYS, little enough for you. If your span-length of time be cloudy, ye cannot but think that your LORD can no more take your blood and your bands without the income and recompense of free-grace, than he would take the sufferings of PAUL, and his other dear servants, that were paid home beyond all counting. (*Rom. viii. 18.*) It was the Potter's aim, that the clay should praise him ; and I hope it satisfieth you, that your clay is for his glory. O who can suffer enough for such a LORD ? And who can lay out in bank enough of pain, shame, losses, or torture, to receive in again the free interest of eternal glory ? (*2 Cor. iv. 17.*) O how advantageous bargaining is it with such a rich LORD ! If your hand and pen had been at leisure to gain glory in paper, it had been but paper-glory ; but the bearing of a public cross so long for JESUS, the Prince of the Kings of the earth, is glory booked in heaven. Worthy and dear brother, if ye go to weigh JESUS, his sweetness, excellency, glory, and beauty, and set against him your ounces of suffering for him, ye shall be straitened in two ways.—1. It will be a pain to make the comparison, the disproportion being by no understanding imaginable. Nay, if angels were set to work, they should never number the degrees of difference.—2. It should straiten you to find a scale for the balance, to lay that high and lofty One, that Prince of excellency, into. If your mind could fancy as many created heavens as time hath had minutes, as trees have had leaves, or as clouds have had drops, since the first stone of the creation was laid, they should not make half a scale to bear and weigh boundless excellency. And therefore the King, whose marks ye are bearing, and whose dying ye carry about with you in your body, is, out of all consideration, beyond and above all our thoughts. For myself, I am content to feed upon wondering sometimes, on beholding but the skirts of

his incomparable glory ; and I think, ye could wish for more ears to give him than ye have, since ye hope these ears ye now have given him shall be passages to take in the music of his glorious voice. O ! who can add to him, who is all ? If he would create new heavens, a thousand thousand degrees more perfect than these that now are ; and would then make a new creation, ten thousand thousand degrees in perfection beyond that new creation ; and again, would still, to eternity, multiply new heavens ; they should never be a perfect resemblance of that infinite excellency, order, weight, measure, beauty, and sweetness, that are in him. O how little of him do we see ! O how shallow are our thoughts of him ! O that I had pain for him, and shame and losses for him, and more clay and spirits for him ; and that I could go upon earth without love, desire, or hope, because CHRIST hath taken away my love, desire, and hope to heaven with him ! I know, worthy Sir, your sufferings for him are your glory ; and therefore be not weary ; his salvation is near at hand, and shall not tarry. Pray for me : His grace be with you !

St. Andrew's,

Nov. 22, 1639.

Yours in his LORD JESUS,

S. R.



TO THE PERSECUTED CHURCH IN IRELAND.

Much honoured, reverend, and dearly beloved in our LORD,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you all ! I know there are many, in this nation, more able than I, to speak to the sufferers for JESUS CHRIST, and witnesses of him ; yet pardon me if I speak a little to you, who are called in question for the Gospel, once committed to you. I hope ye are not ignorant, that as peace was left to you in CHRIST's testament, so the other half of the testament was a legacy of CHRIST's sufferings ; (*John* xvi. 33 ;) " These things have I spoken, that in me ye might have peace ; in the world ye shall have trouble." Because then

ye are made heirs of CHRIST's cross, think that fiery trial no strange thing. For the LORD JESUS shall be no loser by purging the dross and tin out of his church in Ireland; his wine-press is but squeezing out the dregs, the scum, the froth, and refuse of that church. I had once the proof of the honest and honourable peace of that slandered thing, the cross of our LORD JESUS. But though these golden days, which I then had, be now in a great part gone; yet I dare say, that the issue of your sufferings shall be the high glory of the Prince of the Kings of the earth; and the changing of the brass of the LORD's temple among you into gold, and of the iron into silver, and of the wood into brass. "Your officers shall yet be peace, and your exactors righteousness." (*Isa. lx. 17.*) Look over the water, and see who is on the dry land waiting for your landing. Your deliverance is concluded, subscribed, and sealed in heaven; your goods that are taken from you, for the sake of CHRIST and his truth, are but laid in pawn, and not taken away. There is much laid up for you in his storehouse, whose is the earth, and the fulness thereof. Your garments are spun, and your flocks are feeding in the fields, your bread is laid up for you, your gold and silver is at the bank, and the interest goeth on and groweth. If two things were firmly believed, sufferings would have no weight. If the fellowship of CHRIST's sufferings were well known, who would not gladly take part with JESUS? For CHRIST and we are joint-owners of one and the same cross: and therefore he that knew well what sufferings were, as he "esteemed all things but loss for CHRIST," and did "judge them but dung," so did he also thus judge of them, "that he might know the fellowship of his sufferings." (*Phil. iii. 10.*) O how sweet a sight is it, to see a cross betwixt CHRIST and us; to hear our Redeemer say, at every sigh, and every blow, and every loss of a believer, "Half mine!" So they are called, "The sufferings of CHRIST," and "The reproach of CHRIST." (*Col. i. 24; Heb. xi. 26.*) As when two are partners and owners of a ship, the half of the gain, and half of the loss, belongeth

to each of the two ; so CHRIST in our sufferings is half gainer and half loser with us. Yea, the heaviest end of the black tree of the cross lieth on your LORD ; it falleth first upon him, and but reboundeth from him upon you. " The reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me." (*Psa.* lxix. 9.) Your sufferings are your treasure, and are greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. (*Heb.* xi. 26.) And if your cross come first through CHRIST's fingers, ere it come to you, it receiveth a lustre from him ; it getteth a relish of the King's spikenard, and of heaven's perfume ; and the half of the gain, when CHRIST's ship-full of gold cometh home, shall be yours. It is an augmentation of your treasure to be rich in sufferings, to be " in labours abundant, in stripes above measure." (*2 Cor.* xi. 23.) And to have " the sufferings of CHRIST abounding in you," (*2 Cor.* i. 5,) is a part of heaven's flock. Your goods are not lost, which they have plucked from you ; for your LORD hath them in keeping : " Ye shall be fed with the heritage of JACOB your Father ; for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it." (*Isa.* lviii. 14.) Till I shall be on the half-floor of the highest palace, and get a draught of glory out of CHRIST's hand, above and beyond time and beyond death, I shall never (it is likely) see fairer days, than I saw under that blessed tree of my LORD's cross. O sweet for evermore, to see a rose from heaven growing in as ill ground as hell ; and to see CHRIST's love, peace, faith, goodness, long-suffering, and patience, growing, like the flowers of God's garden, out of such stony and cursed ground as the hatred of the Prelates, and Antichrist's bloody hand and heart ! Is not here heaven indented in hell, (if I may say so,) like a jewel set with skill in a ring, with the enamel of CHRIST's cross. And who would not think him worthy of our sufferings for him ? What is burning alive, what is drinking of our heart's blood, or what is a draught of melted lead, for his glory, less than a draught of cold water to a thirsty man, if the right price and due value were put on that worthy Prince, JESUS ? O who can weigh him ! Ten thousand

thousand heavens would not be one scale of the balance to lay him in. O black angels, in comparison of him! O dim and dark sun, in regard of that fair Sun of Righteousness! O worthless heaven of heavens, when they stand beside my worthy, and high, and excellent Well-beloved! O weak and infirm Kings of clay, O soft and feeble mountains of brass, and weak created strength, in regard of our mighty and strong LORD of armies! O foolish wisdom of men and angels, when it is laid in the balance beside that spotless and substantial WISDOM OF THE FATHER! If heaven and earth, and ten thousand heavens, even round about these heavens that now are, were all in one garden of paradise, decked with all the fairest roses, flowers, and trees, that can come forth from the art of the ALMIGHTY; yet set but our one Flower, which groweth out of the root of JESSE, beside that orchard of pleasure,—and one look of him, one view, one taste, one odour of his Godhead, would infinitely exceed the fragrance, colour, beauty, and loveliness of that paradise. O for less of the creatures, and more of thee! O open the passage of the well of love and glory on us, dry pits and withered trees! O that jewel and flower of heaven! If our Beloved were not mistaken by us, and unknown to us, he would have no scarcity of lovers. He would make heaven and earth both see that they cannot quench his love; for his love is a sea. He, He, Himself, is more excellent than heaven. For heaven, as it cometh into the souls and spirits of the glorified, is but a creature; and He is more than a creature. O what a life were it, to sit beside this well of love, and drink of it, and praise, and praise and drink of it again; and then to have desires and faculties extended out, as it were, many thousand fathoms in length and breadth, to take in seas and rivers of love! I earnestly desire to recommend this love to you; that this love may cause you to keep his commandments, to keep clean hands, and make clean feet, that ye may walk as the redeemed of the LORD. Woe, woe be to them that put on his name, and shame this love of CHRIST with a loose and profane life: their

feet, tongue, and hands, and eyes, give a shameless lie to the holy Gospel which they profess. I beseech you in the LORD, keep CHRIST, and walk with him; let not his fairness be spotted by godless living. O. who can find it in their hearts to sin against love,—and such a love, as the glorified in heaven shall delight to live into, and drink of for ever; for they are evermore drinking in love, and the cup is still at their head, and yet without loathing; for they still drink of it, and still desire to drink of it, for ever and ever. Let not me, a stranger to you, who never saw your face in the flesh, be thought bold in writing to you; for the hope I have of a glorious church in that land, and the love of CHRIST, constrain me. I know that the worthy servants of CHRIST, who once laboured among you, cease not to write to you also. Let me entreat you for your prayers for myself, the flock, and Ministry, and on the subject of my fear of a transportation from this place of the LORD's vineyard. Now the very God of peace sanctify you throughout! Grace be with you all!

Your Brother and Companion

In the kingdom and patience of JESUS CHRIST,

Anwoth, 1639.

S. R.



TO MR. HENRY STEWART, HIS WIFE, AND TWO
DAUGHTERS

All Prisoners of CHRIST at Dublin.

Truely-honoured, and dearly-beloved,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you from GOD our FATHER, and our LORD JESUS CHRIST! Think it not strange, beloved in our LORD JESUS, that SATAN can command keys of prisons, and bolts, and chains; this is a piece of the Devil's pryncedom that he hath over the world. Understand our LORD well in this; be not jealous of his love, though he make devils and men his under-servants to scour the rust off your faith, and purge you from your

dross. And let me charge you, O prisoners of hope, to open your window, and to look out by faith; behold heaven's post, that speedy and swift salvation of God, that is coming to you. It is a broad river that faith will not look over; it is a broad sea, of which they of a lively hope cannot behold the other shore. Look over the water; your anchor is fixed within the veil: the one end of the cable is about the prisoner of CHRIST, and the other is "entered within the veil, whither the Forerunner is entered for you." (*Heb.* vi. 19, 20.) It can go straight through the fire of the wrath of men, devils, losses, tortures, death, without a thread of it being singed. Men and devils have no teeth to bite it in two. Hold fast till He come. Your cross is of the colour of heaven and CHRIST; and that dye can abide the foul weather, and neither be stained nor cast the colour. When your lovely JESUS had no better than the thief's doom, it is no wonder that your process should be lawless; for he was taken, buffeted, whipped, and spit upon, before he was convicted of any fault. O such a pair of sufferers as JESUS, and a piece of guilty clay, under one yoke! O how lovely is the cross, with such a second! I believe that your prison is enacted, in God's court, not to keep you till your hope breathe out its last; your cross is under law to restore you safe to your brethren and sisters in CHRIST. Take heaven and CHRIST's bond for a fair door out of your suffering. It were good to be armed before-hand for death, or bodily tortures for CHRIST; and think what a crown of honour it is, that God hath given you pieces of living clay, to be tortured witnesses for saving truth; and that ye are so happy, as to have some blood to give out for that royal LORD, who hath caused you to avouch Himself before men. Do not wonder to see blinded men threaten you with death and burial, and to raze out truth's name: but where will they make a grave for the Gospel and the LORD's church? Earth and hell shall be but little bounds for their burial; lay all the clay and rubbish of the whole earth above our LORD's church, yet it will not cover her, nor hold her

down ; she shall live, and not die ; she shall behold the salvation of GOD. O what glory is it, to suffer for the LORD's glory ! Nay, though his servants had a body to burn for ever for this Gospel, so that the glory of JESUS did but rise out of these flames, and out of that burning body, O what a sweet fire ! What if the ashes of the burned body were musicians to sing his praises, and the highness of that Prince of Ages ! O what love is it in him, that he will have such musicians as we are, to tune that psalm of his everlasting praises in heaven. O what shining and burning flames of love are those, that lead Him to divide his share of life, of heaven, and glory, with you ! A part of his throne, one draught of his wine, (his wine of glory and life, that comes from under the throne of GOD and the LAMB,) and one apple of the Tree of Life, will more than make up all the expenses of clay lent out for heaven. We have short, narrow, and creeping thoughts of JESUS, and do but shape CHRIST, in our conceptions, according to some created portraiture ! O Angels, lend your help to make songs of him who is the fairest amongst ten thousand ! O heavens, O heaven of heavens, O glorified tenants and triumphant householders with the LAMB, put in new psalms of the excellency of our LORD, and help us to set him on high ! O indwellers of earth and heaven, sea and air, O all ye created beings within the bosom of this great world, come and help to set on high the praises of our LORD ! O fairness of creatures, blush before his uncreated beauty ! O created strength, be amazed before the strong LORD of Hosts ? O created love, think shame of thyself before this unparalleled love of heaven ! O Angel of wisdom, hide thyself before our LORD, whose understanding passeth finding out ! O Sun, in thy shining beauty, put on a web of darkness, and cover thyself before thy bright Master and Maker ! O who can add glory, by doing or suffering, to this Great Being ! We can but bring our drop to this sea, and our candle, dim and dark as it is, to this clear Sun of heaven and

earth! We have cause to drink ten deaths, or to swim through ten seas, in order to be at that land of praises, where we shall see that wonder, and enjoy this jewel of heaven's jewels! O death, do thy utmost against us! O torments, O malice of men and devils, waste your strength on the witnesses of our LORD's testament! O devils, bring all hell to help you, in tormenting the followers of the LAMB! We will defy you to make us too soon happy, and to waft us too soon over the water, to the land where the noble Plant, "the Plant of Renown," groweth. O cruel time, that suspends those dearest enjoyments, in which we shall be bathed, soul and body, in the depths of this love! O time, run fast! O motions, mend your pace! "O Well-beloved, be like a young roe upon the mountains of separation!" Hasten our desired meeting! Love is sick to hear tell of "to-morrow." And what then can come wrong to you, O honourable witnesses of his truth? Men have no more of you to work upon, but some few inches of sick clay: your spirits are above their courts; your souls, your love to CHRIST, your faith, cannot be summoned, nor sentenced, nor accused, nor condemned, by Pope, deputy, ruler, or tyrant; your faith is a free lord, and cannot be a captive. All the malice of hell and earth can but hurt the scabbard of a believer; and death, at the worst, can get but a clay-pawn in keeping, till your LORD take the King's keys, and open your graves. Therefore let a post-way be laid betwixt your prison and heaven, and go up and visit your treasure. Enjoy your Beloved, and dwell upon his love, till eternity come in time's room, and put you into possession of your eternal happiness. Keep your love to CHRIST; lay up your faith in heaven's keeping; and follow the Prince of martyrs, who witnessed a fair confession before PONTIUS PILATE; your cause and his is all one. The opposers of his cause are like drunken judges, who in their cups would make laws that the sun should not rise and shine on the earth; and send their officers and pursuivants to charge the sun and moon to give no more light to the

world; or who would enact in their court-books, that the sea, after once ebbing, should never flow again: but would not the sun, and moon, and sea, break those acts, and keep their Creator's directions? The Devil, the great fool, and the father of these under-fools, is more malicious than wise, that sets the spirits on earth at work, to contend with heaven's wisdom, and to give mandates and summons to our sun, our great star of heaven, JESUS, not to shine, in the beauty of his Gospel, to the chosen and bought ones.—O thou fair Sun of Righteousness, arise and shine in thy strength, whether earth or hell will or not! O victorious Conqueror, ride prosperously upon truth; stretch out thy sceptre as far as the sun shines, and the moon waxeth and waneth! Put on thy glittering crown, O thou Maker of Kings, and make but one step of the whole earth, and travel in the greatness of thy strength, (*Isa.* lxiii. 1, 2,) and let thy apparel be red, and all dyed with the blood of thy enemies! Thou art righteous heir to the kingdoms of the world.—Laugh ye at the brain-sick worms, that dare say in good earnest, “This man shall not reign over us;” as though they were casting the dice for CHRIST's crown, which of them should have it. I know that ye believe the coming of CHRIST's kingdom: believe under a cloud, and wait for him, when there is no moon-light nor star-light. Let faith live and breathe, and lay hold on the sure salvation of GOD, when clouds and darkness are about you. Take heed of unbelieving hearts, which can father lies upon CHRIST: beware of,—“Doth his promise fail for evermore?” (*Psa.* lxxvii. 8,)—for it was a man (and not GOD) that said it, who dreamed that a promise of GOD could fail. O sweet word of faith, (*Job* xiii. 15,) “Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him!” Faith's eyes can see through a gloom of GOD, and under it read GOD's thoughts of love and peace. Hold fast CHRIST in the dark; surely ye shall see the salvation of GOD. I profess, it should beseem men of great parts, rather than me, to write to you; but I love your cause, and must entreat the help of your prayers, in this my weighty charge here, for the

University and pulpit, and that ye would entreat your acquaintance also to help me. Grace be with you all! Amen.

Your Brother and Companion

In the patience and kingdom of JESUS CHRIST,

St. Andrew's, 1640.

S. R.



TO JOHN FENNICK.

Much honoured and dear Friend,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you! The necessary impediments of my calling have hitherto kept me from making a return to your letter, the heads whereof I shall now briefly answer.—I approve of your going to the fountain, when your own cistern is dry. Ye commend his free love; and it is well done: O that I could help you, and that I could gather an earth-full and an heaven-full of tongues, to raise a song of praises to him, betwixt the east and west, and the furthest points of the broad heaven! Come, come, dear friend, and be pained, that the King's free love and his banqueting-house should be so abundant, so overflowing, and your shallow vessel so little to take in some part of that love. But since it cannot come into you, for want of room, enter yourself into this sea of love, and breathe under these waters, and live as one swallowed up of this love. Your troubles are many and great, yet not an ounce-weight beyond the measure of infinite wisdom, nor beyond the measure of grace that he is ready to bestow; for our LORD never yet brake the back of his child. O what bonds hath our chirurgeon of broken spirits, to bind up all his lame and bruised ones with! Cast your disjointed spirit into his lap, and lay your burden upon one who is so willing to take your cares and your fears from you, and to exchange your crosses, and to give you new for old, and gold for iron, even to give you garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Wait on, till he return with salvation, and cause you to rejoice in the latter end.

It is not much to complain ; but rather believe than complain, and sit in the dust, and close your mouth, till he make your light to grow again. For your afflictions are not eternal ; time will end them ; and so shall ye at length see the Lord's salvation. His love sleepeth not, but is still working for you ; his salvation shall not tarry nor linger ; and suffering for him is the noblest cross that is out of heaven. Your LORD hath the choice of ten thousand other crosses to exercise you with ; but his wisdom and his love chose out this for you, in preference to them all : take it as a choice one, and make use of it, so as to look to this world as your step-mother in your borrowed prison ; for it is a longing look to heaven, and to the other side of the water, that God seeketh : and this is the fruit, the flower, and the bloom, growing out of your cross, that ye be a dead man to time, to clay, to gold, to country, to friends, to wife, to children, and all pieces of created nothings ; for in them there is not a seat nor a bottom for our love. O what room there is for your love (if it were as broad as the sea) in heaven and in God ! And what would not CHRIST give for your love ? God gave so much for your soul ; and blessed are ye if ye have a love for him, and can call in your soul's love from all idols, and can make a God of God, a God of CHRIST, and draw a line betwixt your heart and him. If your deliverance come not, CHRIST's love must stand as surety for your deliverance, till your LORD send it in his blessed time ; for CHRIST hath many salvations, if we could see them. And I would think it better-born comfort and joy that cometh from the faith of deliverance, and the faith of his love, than that which cometh from deliverance itself. It is not much matter, if ye find ease to your afflicted soul, what be the means, either of your own wishing, or of God's choosing ; the latter I am sure is best, and the comfort strongest and sweetest. Let the LORD absolutely have the ordering of your troubles ; and put them off yourselves, by recommending your furnace to him, who hath skill to melt his own metal, and knoweth well what to do with his

furnace. Let your heart be willing that God's fire have your tin, and brass, and dross. Now take CHRIST in with you under your yoke, and "let patience have her perfect work." The LORD is rising up to do you good in the latter end: see him posting and hasting towards you! Help me with your prayers for this people, this College, and my own poor soul. Grace be with you!

St. Andrew's,
February 13, 1640.

Yours in CHRIST JESUS,

S. R.



TO LADY BOYD.

MADAM,

Grace, mercy, and peace, be to you! I wish I could speak or write what might do good to your Ladyship; especially now, when ye cannot but have deep thoughts of the ways of the LORD, in taking away, with a sudden and wonderful stroke, your brethren and friends. It is true, your brethren saw not many summers; but adore the sovereignty of the great Potter, who maketh and marreth his clay-vessels when and how it pleaseth him. The undergarden is absolutely his own, and all that groweth in it: the flowers are his own: if some be but summer-apples, he may pluck them down before others. O what wisdom is it to believe, and not to dispute; to subject the thoughts to his court, and not to repine at any act of his justice! He hath done it; all flesh be silent! It is impossible to be submissive and religiously patient, if ye stay your thoughts among the confused rollings of second causes; as, "O the place! O the time! O, if that had been, this had not followed! O the linking of that accident with this time and place!" Look up to the master-motion, and the first wheel; see and read the decree of heaven and of the Creator of men, who breweth death to his children, and the manner of it. They who have eyes to see through one side of a mountain to the other, who can take up his

ways, see "how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" His Providence halteth not, but goeth even; yet they were not the greatest sinners, upon whom the tower of Siloam fell. Was not time's lease expired, and the sand of heaven's sand-glass, set by our LORD, run out? Is not he an unjust debtor, who payeth due debt with chiding? Yet, Madam, live upon faith in the love of Him, whose arrows are pointed with love to his own, and who knoweth how to take you and yours out of the roll and book of the dead. Read and spell aright all the words and syllables in the visitation, and miscall neither letter nor syllable in it. What is wrath to others, is mercy to you, and your house. It is faith's work to challenge loving-kindness out of all the roughest strokes of God. Do that for the LORD, which ye will do for time: time will calm your heart at that which God hath done; and let our LORD have it now. What love ye did bear to friends now dead, seeing they stand now in no need of it, let it fall as a just legacy to CHRIST. O how sweet, to put out many strange lovers, and to put in CHRIST! It is much for our half-slain affections to part with that to which we believe we have a right: but a servant's will should be our will; and he is the best servant, who retaineth least of his own will, and most of his master's. Strokes upon his secret ones come from the soft and heavenly hand of the MEDIATOR; and his rods are steeped in that river of love which cometh from the GOD-MAN's heart of our Redeemer, JESUS. Time's thread is short; ye are upon the entry of heaven's harvest; and CHRIST, the field of heaven's glory, is white and ripe-like. The losses that I write of to your Ladyship are but summer-showers, that will only wet your garments for an hour or two; and the sun of the New Jerusalem shall quickly dry the wet coat; especially seeing that rains or afflictions cannot stain the image of God. Day-light is near, when such a morning-darkness is upon you; and this trial of your christian mind towards Him, whom ye dare not leave, although he should slay you, shall close with a

doubled mercy. It is time for faith to hold fast as much of **CHRIST** as ever ye had, and to cleave closer to him; seeing that **CHRIST** loveth to be believed in, and trusted to. The glory of laying strength upon one that is mighty to save, is more than we can think. That piece of service, believing in a smiting **REDEEMER**, is a precious part of obedience. O what glory to him, to lay the burden of our heaven upon him, that purchased for us an eternal kingdom!

Madam,

Your Ladyship's in **CHRIST**,

1640.

S. R.



TO MRS. HUME.

LOVING SISTER,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you! If ye have any thing better than the husband of your youth, ye are **JESUS CHRIST**'s debtor for it; pay not then your debts with grudging. Sorrow may diminish the sweet fruit of righteousness; but quietness, silence, submission, and faith, put a crown upon your sad losses. Ye know whose voice the voice of a crying rod is. (*Micah* vi. 9.) The name and majesty of the **LORD** are written on the rod; read and be instructed. Let **CHRIST** have the room of the husband. *He* hath now no need of you, or of your love; for he enjoyeth as much of the love of **CHRIST** as his heart can be capable of. I confess, it is a dear-bought experience, to teach you to undervalue the creature; yet it is not too dear, if **CHRIST** think it so. I know that your thoughts against his going thither, the way and manner of his death, the instruments, the place, and the time, will not ease your spirits, except ye rise higher than second causes, and be silent because the **LORD** hath done it. If we measure the goings of the **ALMIGHTY**, and his ways, the bottom whereof we see not, we quite mistake **GOD**. O how little a portion of **GOD** see we! He is far above our narrow thoughts. He ruled the world in wisdom, before

we, creatures of yesterday, were born; and shall rule it, when we shall be lodging beside the worms and corruption. Only learn heavenly wisdom, self-denial, and mortification by this sad loss. I know that it is not for nothing, (except ye deny God to be wise in all he doth,) that ye have lost one on earth. There hath been too little of your heart in heaven, and therefore the jealousy of CHRIST hath done this: it is a mercy that he contendeth with you and all your lovers. I should desire no greater favour for myself, than that CHRIST took such bonds upon himself as these, "Such an one I have; and such a soul I cannot live in heaven without." (See *John* x. 16.) And believe it, it is in incomprehensible love that CHRIST saith, "Though I enjoy the glory of my FATHER, and the crown of heaven, far above men and angels, I must use all means, though ever so violent, to have the company of such an one for ever." If with the eyes of wisdom, as a child of wisdom, ye justify your mother, the wisdom of God, (whose child ye are,) ye shall embrace this loss, and see much of CHRIST in it. Believe and submit; and refer the event of the trial to your heavenly FATHER, who numbereth all your hairs. And put CHRIST in his own room in your love;—it may be that he hath either been out of his own place, or in a place of love inferior to his worth. Make reparation to CHRIST for all his wrongs done to him, and love him for a husband; and he, who is a husband to the widow, shall be that to you which he hath taken from you. Grace be with you!

London,
Oct. 15, 1645.

Your sympathizing Brother,

S. R.



TO BARBARA HAMILTON.

LOVING SISTER,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you! I have heard with grief, that Newcastle hath taken one more in a

bloody account, even your son-in-law, and my friend; but I hope ye have learned so much of CHRIST, as not to look to wheels rolled round about on earth. Earthen vessels are not to dispute with their Former; pieces of sinning clay may, by reasoning and contending with the Potter, mar the work of Him who has his fire in ZION, and his furnace in Jerusalem; as bullocks, wrestling in the furrow, make their yoke more heavy. In quietness and rest ye shall be saved. If men do any thing, we may ask both *who* did it, and *what* is done, and *why*. When God hath done any thing, we are to inquire *who* hath done it, and to know that this cometh from the LORD, who is wonderful in counsel; but we are not to ask *what* or *why*. If it be from the LORD, as certainly there is no evil in the city without him, (*Amos iii. 6.*) it is enough. The fairest face of his spotless way is but coming, and ye are to believe his works as well as his word. Violent death is a sharer with CHRIST in his death, which was violent. It mattereth not much by what way we go to heaven; the happy home is all, where the roughness of the way shall be forgotten. He is gone home to a friend's house, and made welcome. The race is ended; time is recompensed with eternity. God's order is in wisdom; the husband goes home before the wife. The throng of the market shall be over, before it be long, and another generation where we now are; and, at length, an empty house, and not one of mankind shall be upon the earth: within the sixth part of an hour after, the earth, and the works that are therein, will be burnt up with fire. We cannot teach the ALMIGHTY knowledge. When he was directing the bullet against his servant, to fetch out the soul, no wise man could cry to God, "Wrong, wrong, LORD; for he is thine own!" There is no mist over his eyes, who is wonderful in counsel. If ZION be builded with your son-in-law's blood, the LORD (deep in counsel) can glew together the stones of ZION with blood, and with that blood which is precious in his eyes. CHRIST hath fewer labourers in his vineyard than he had; but some more witnesses for his cause. — What is CHRIST's

gain, is not your loss : let not that, which is his holy and wise will, be your unbelieving sorrow. Though I really judge that I had interest in his dead servant, yet because he now liveth to CHRIST, I quit the hopes I had of his successful labouring in the ministry ; I know that he now praiseth the grace which he was to preach. Give glory therefore to CHRIST, as he now doth, and say, "Thy will be done." The grace and consolation of CHRIST be with you !

London.
Nov 15, 1645.

Yours in his LORD JESUS,
S. R.



TO A CHRISTIAN GENTLEWOMAN.

MADAM,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be to you ! If death, which is before you and us all, were any other thing but a friendly dissolution, it would seem a hard voyage, to go through such a dark trance, so thorny a valley, as is the wages of sin : but I am confident, that the way ye know, though your foot never trod in that black shadow ; and the loss of life is gain to you. If CHRIST JESUS be the lodging, at the end of your journey, there is no fear, and ye go to a friend ; and since ye have had communion with him in this life, and he hath a pledge of yours, even the largest share of your heart, ye may look death in the face with joy. If the heart be in heaven, the remnant of you cannot be kept the prisoner of the Second Death. But though he be the same CHRIST in the other life, as ye found him to be here, yet he is so far, in his excellency, beauty, sweetness, and beams of majesty, above what he appeared here, when he is seen as he is, that he shall appear a new CHRIST ; and the ointment of his name, poured out on you, shall appear to have more of God, and a stronger fragrance of heaven, of eternity, of Godhead, of majesty and glory,

there than here ; as water at the fountain, or apples in the orchard, and beside the tree, have more of their native sweetness, taste, and beauty, than when transported to us some hundred miles. I mean not that CHRIST can lose any of his sweetness in the carrying ; or that he in his Godhead can be changed for the worse, betwixt the little spot of the earth ye are in, and the right hand of the FATHER, far above all heavens : but the change will be in you, when ye shall have new senses ; when the soul shall be a more deep and more capacious vessel, to take in more of CHRIST ; and when means, the chariot, the Gospel, in which he is now carried, and ordinances which convey him, shall be removed. Surely ye cannot now be said to see him face to face, or to drink of the wine of the highest fountain, or to take in seas of fresh love immediately without vessels, or messengers, at the fountain itself, as ye shall do a few days hence, when ye shall be so near as to be with CHRIST. Ye would (no doubt) bestow a day's journey, yea, many days' journey on earth, to go up to heaven, and fetch down any thing of CHRIST ; how much more may ye be willing to make a journey to go in person to heaven, (it is no lost time, but a gained eternity,) to enjoy the full Godhead ? He is not there, as he is here with us, in a drop of grace and sweetness ; but in his marriage-robe of glory,—richer, more costly, more precious, than a million of worlds. O the well is deep ! Ye shall then think, that preachers on earth did but mar his praises, when they spoke of him. Alas ! we but make CHRIST black, and less lovely, in making such dry, and cold, and low expressions of his transcendent super-excellency. Go and see ; and we desire to go with you. If, in that last journey, ye tread on a serpent in the way, and thereby wound your heel, as JESUS CHRIST did before you, the print of the wound shall not be known at the resurrection of the just. Death is but a step over time and sin to CHRIST, who knew and felt the worst of death ; for death's teeth hurt him. We know that death hath no teeth now, no jaws, for they are broken. It is a free prison ; citizens pay nothing for the

grave ; the gaoler, who had the power of death, is destroyed : praise and glory be to the First-begotten of the dead ! The worst that may be, is, that you leave behind you children, husband, and the church of God in miseries ; but ye cannot get them to heaven with you for the present ; ye shall not miss them ; and CHRIST cannot miscount one of the poorest of his lambs. Ye shall see them again in the day when the SON shall render up the kingdom to his FATHER. The evening of every poor hireling is coming ; and the church of CHRIST's sun in this life is declining low : not a soul of the militant company will be here within a few generations ; our LORD will send for them all. It is a rich mercy that we are not married to time longer than till the course be finished. Ye may rejoice, that ye got not to heaven till ye knew that JESUS is there before you ; so that when ye come thither, at your first entry, ye may find the smell of his myrrh, aloes, and cassia. And this first salutation of his will make you find that it is no uncomfortable thing to die. Go and enjoy your gain ; live on CHRIST's love while ye are here, and all the way. As for the church ye leave behind you, the government is upon CHRIST's shoulders, and he will plead for the blood of his saints. The bush hath been burning above a thousand years, and we never yet saw the ashes of this fire. Yet a little while, and the vision shall not tarry ; it shall speak, and not lie. I am more afraid of my duty, than of the head of CHRIST's government. He cannot fail to bring judgment to victory. O that we could wait for our hidden life ! O that CHRIST would remove the covering, draw aside the curtain of time, and rend the heavens and come down ! O that the night were gone, that the day would break, and that he would cry to his heavenly trumpeters, " Make ready ; let us go down and fold together the four corners of the world ! " His grace be with you ! Now, if I have found favour with you, and if ye judge me faithful, my last suit to you is, that ye would leave me a legacy, and that is, that my name may be at the very last in your prayers ; as I desire also that it may be in

the prayers of those of your christian acquaintance with whom ye have been intimate.

London,
Jan 9, 1646.

Your Brother in his own **LORD JESUS,**
S. R.



TO THE VISCOUNTESS OF KENMURE.

MADAM,

GRACE, mercy, and peace, be unto you! I know that ye are near many comforters, and that THE promised COMFORTER is near also; yet, because I found your Ladyship comfortable to myself in my sad days, it is my part (although I can do little, GOD knoweth,) to speak to you in your wilderness-lot. I know, dear and noble lady, that this loss of your dear child came upon you one part after another; ye were looking for it; and now the ALMIGHTY hath brought on you that which ye feared; your LORD gave you lawful warning: and I hope that, for his sake, who brewed this cup in heaven, ye will gladly drink it, and salute and welcome the cross. I am sure, it is not your LORD's mind to feed you with judgment and wormwood. I know that your cup is sweetened with mercy; and that the withering of the bloom, the flower of worldly joys, is for no other end but to buy out the reversion of your heart and love. Madam, subscribe to the ALMIGHTY's will; put your hand to the pen; and let the cross of your LORD JESUS have your submissive and resolute Amen. If ye ask and try whose this cross is, I dare say, it is not all your own; the best half of it is CHRIST's. (*Isa. lxiii. 9.*) "In all their afflictions he was afflicted." CHRIST bore the first stroke of this cross; and it rebounded from Him upon you. And I believe, for my part, that he intendeth to distil heaven out of this loss, and all others of the like kind; for wisdom devised it, and love laid it on, and CHRIST owneth it as his own, and putteth your shoulder only beneath a piece of it. Take it with joy as no bastard

cross, but as a visitation of God, well-born ; spend the rest of your appointed time, till your change come, in the work of believing ; and let faith, that never yet made a lie to you, speak for God's part of it : he will not, he doth not make you " a sea or a whale, that he keepeth you in ward." (*Job* vii. 12.) It may be, ye think that not many of the children of God are in such a hard case as yourself ; but what would ye think of some, who would exchange afflictions, and give you to the boot ? But I know, yours must be your own alone, and CHRIST's together. I confess it seemed strange to me, that your LORD should have done that, which seemeth to destroy all your worldly comforts : but we see not the ground of the ALMIGHTY's Sovereignty. He goeth by on our right-hand, and on our left-hand, and we see him not. We see but pieces of the broken links of the chain of his Providence ; and he coggeth the wheels of his own Providence, that we see not. O let the Former work his own clay in what frame he pleaseth ! Shall any teach the ALMIGHTY knowledge ? If he pursue dry stubble, who dare say, " What dost thou ? " Do not wonder to see the Judge of the world weave, in one web, your mercies, and the judgments of the house of Kenmure : He can make one web of contraries. But my weak advice is that you, dear and worthy Lady, should see how far mortification goeth on, and what scum the LORD's fire casteth out of you. I know, ye see your knottiness, since our LORD heweth and planeth you ; and the glancing of the furnace is to let you see what froth is in nature, that must be boiled out, and taken off in the fire of your trials. I do not say, that heavier afflictions prophesy heavier guiltiness ;—a cross is often but a false prophet in this kind. But I am sure that our LORD would have the tin and the bastard-metal in you removed ; lest the LORD say, " The bellows are burned, the lead is consumed in the fire, the founder melteth in vain." (*Jer.* vi. 29.) And I shall hope, that grief will not so far smother your light, as to make you omit to practise the necessary duty of concurring with him in this blessed design. It is a christian art, to

comfort yourself in the LORD; to say, "I was obliged to render back this child to the Giver; and if I have had four years' loan of him, and CHRIST eternity's possession of him, the LORD hath kept condition with me." Madam, I would I could divide sorrow with you, for your ease; but I am but a Beholder. It is easy to me to speak: the God of Comfort speak to you, and allure you with his love! My removal from my flock is so heavy to me, that it maketh my life a burden to me; I had never such a longing for death: the LORD help and hold up sad clay! Grace be with you!

Kirkcudbright, Your Ladyship's, at all obedience in CHRIST,
Oct. 1, 1649. S. R.



TO MRS. CRAIG,

Upon the Death of her Son, who was drowned in a river.

MADAM,

YOU have so learned CHRIST, that now in the furnace, what is dross, and what shining faith, must come forth. I heard of the removal of your son. Since it is according to the spotless and holy will of the LORD, where, and before what witnesses, and in what manner, whether by a fever, the mother being at the bed-side, or by some other way in a far country, your safest plan will be, to be silent, and command the heart to utter no repining or fretting thoughts of the holy dispensation of God. Consider,—1. The man is beyond the hazard of dispute; the precious youth is perfected and glorified.—2. Had the youth lain pained beside a witnessing mother, it had been pain and grief lengthened out to you in many portions, and every parcel would have been a little death: now his holy Majesty hath, in one lump, brought to your ears the news, and hath not divided the grief into many.—3. It was not yesterday's thought, or the other year's statute, but a counsel of the LORD of old; and, "Who can teach the ALMIGHTY

knowledge? ”—4. There is no way of quieting the mind, and of silencing the heart of a mother, but godly submission. The readiest way for peace and consolation to clay-vessels, is, that it is a stroke of the Potter, and the Former of all things. I know your light; and I hope your heart also will yield. It is not safe to be at pulling and drawing with the omnipotent LORD: let the pull go with him, for he is strong; and say, “Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.”—5. His holy method and order are to be adored. Sometimes the husband is taken before the wife, and sometimes the son before the mother; so hath the only wise God ordered: and since he is only sent before, and not lost, “in all things give thanks.”—6. Meditate not too much on the circumstances. The mother was not witness to the last sight, and cannot get leave to wind the son, nor to weep over his grave; and he was in a strange land. There is a like nearness to heaven out of all the countries of the earth.—7. It is art, and the skill of faith, to read what the LORD writes upon the cross; often we miscall words and sentences of the cross, and either put nonsense on his rods, or burden his Majesty with slanders and mistakes, when he designs for us thoughts of peace and love, even to do us good in the latter end.—8. There is a bad way of sullenly swallowing a trial, without digesting it; or of laying it out of memory, without any victoriousness of faith. The LORD, who forbids fainting under chastisement, forbids also our despising it. But it is easier to counsel than to suffer. The only wise LORD furnish patience! Grace be with you!

St. Andrew's,
May 4, 1660.

Yours in the LORD,

S. R.

TO MR. JAMES GUTHRIE,

Minister of the Gospel at Stirling.

DEAR BROTHER,

WE are very often comforted with the word of Promise ; though we stumble not a little at the work of holy Providence, when we see some earthly men flourishing as a green herb, and the people of GOD counted as sheep for the slaughter, and killed all the day long. And yet, both the word of Promise, and the works of Providence, are from Him, whose ways are equal, holy, and spotless. As for me, when I think of GOD'S dispensations, he might justly have brought to the market-cross, and to the light, my secret abominations, which would have been no small reproach to the holy name of CHRIST ; but in mercy he hath covered these, and carved out more honourable causes of suffering, of which we are unworthy. And now, dear Brother, much depends upon the manner of suffering, especially, that his precious truths be owned with all heavenly boldness, and a reason of our hope given in meekness and fear, and the royal crown of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, the Prince of the Kings of the earth, avouched. There are yet a few names in the land, that have not defiled their garments ; and a holy seed, on whom the LORD will have mercy, like the four or five olive-branches upon the top of the shaken olive-tree, and whose eye shall be toward the LORD their Maker. Think it not strange, whatsoever men devise against you. Whether it be exile,—the earth is the LORD'S ; or perpetual imprisonment,—the LORD is your light and liberty ; or a violent and public death,—the Kingdom of heaven consists in a fair company of glorified martyrs and witnesses, of whom JESUS CHRIST is the chief witness, who for that cause was born, and came into the world. Happy are ye, if you give testimony to the world of your preferring JESUS CHRIST to all powers ; and the LORD will make the innocency of his despised witnesses in this land

to shine to after-generations, and will take the man-child up to God and to his throne, and prepare a hidden place in the wilderness for the mother, and cause the earth to help the woman. Be not terrified; fret not: forgive your enemies: bless and curse not; for though both you and I should be silent, heavy are the judgment and indignation from the LORD, which await the unfaithful watchmen of the Church of Scotland. The souls under the altar are crying for justice, and there is an answer returned already: the LORD's salvation will not tarry. Cast the burden of wife and children on the LORD CHRIST. He cares for you and them: your blood is precious in his sight. The everlasting consolations of the LORD bear you up, and give you hope: for your salvation (if not your deliverance) is concluded.

St. Andrew's,
Feb. 15, 1661.

Your own Brother,
S. R.

EXTRACTS

FROM

THE WORKS

OF

DR. HORNECK:

CONTAINING

- I. EXTRACTS FROM THE HAPPY ASCETIC, OR BEST
EXERCISE.**
- II. A LETTER CONCERNING THE LIVES OF THE
PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS.**

THE HAPPY ASCETIC:

OR, THE

BEST EXERCISE:

TOGETHER WITH

PRAYERS SUITABLE TO EACH EXERCISE:

BY

ANTHONY HORNECK, D. D.

VOL. XVI.

U

THE HAPPY ASCETIC:

OR,

THE BEST EXERCISE.

1 TIM. IV. 7.

Exercise thyself unto godliness.

THIS chapter is partly prophetical, partly doctrinal;—partly foretelling what would come to pass in the last days; partly intimating what work a man, who looks for another life, hath to do, while he sojourns on this side of heaven. In the prophetic part, ST. PAUL acquaints TIMOTHY with the strange degeneracy and corruption of religion, which would ensue in after-ages;—how men, under a show of strictness, would prohibit what GOD had, like an indulgent Father, permitted to his creatures: under pretence of doing more than GOD hath commanded, would set up the kingdom of the Devil; and, by crying out against eating flesh, and marriage, would discover to the world, that they are more in love with their idle fancies and inventions, than with the will of GOD, blessed for evermore.

Whoever they be at whom he aims, they are not men that, by way of mortification, and with a pious intent to subdue their lusts, voluntarily abstain from either: for such spiritual exercises many good men, and excellent servants of GOD, did always use. That DANIEL and his companions,—ST. MATTHEW,—and ST. JAMES,—abstained altogether from fish and flesh, and all things that had life, is asserted by JOSEPHUS, CLEMENS ALEXANDRINUS, and ST. AUGUSTINE: and ecclesiastical history speaks of ALCIBIADES, OLYMPIAS, and divers others, who lived altogether

upon herbs and fruits of the earth. Some did this, because they thought it more wholesome ; and others, because they looked upon it as a means to promote seriousness and heavenly-mindedness ; which makes **ST. CHRYSOSTOM** commend those that could do so. But these Christians, who were thus temperate, neither condemned those that eat flesh, nor prescribed these rules as necessary to others ; much less had they any abhorrency from flesh, or from marriage, as things unlawful. Those whom the Apostle reproves here, were men who both commanded such abstinence, and declared that eating flesh, and marrying, were sinful, and proceeded from the Devil.

In the doctrinal part, which begins at the sixth verse, he considers **TIMOTHY** as a Christian and a Bishop, and accordingly prescribes to him rules to be observed by him in that double capacity. The Church in those days was already infested by ravenous wolves, men whom the Devil sent into the world to oppose the design of Christianity, and to keep deluded mortals in sin and error. These false prophets, taught by a more cunning master, invented various ways to undermine the new proselytes of Christianity. Sometimes they boasted of their learning and wisdom, and sought to render the wisdom of the Cross contemptible. Sometimes they made the world believe, that they knew great mysteries, of which the true Apostles were ignorant ; and, particularly, the disciples of **SIMON MAGUS** would tell strange stories of the cause of good and evil, of the battle of angels, and of the creation of the world, which the Apostle (*ver. 7*) calls “ profane and old wives’ fables ;” and therefore he doth charge **TIMOTHY** to despise them, and to mind nobler things, such as tended to the advancement of **GOD**’s glory, the Church’s good, and his own joy in the day of our **LORD JESUS**,—whereof spiritual Exercises, in the ways of godliness, are chief: “ Therefore,” saith he, “ exercise thyself rather unto godliness.”

Before I enter upon any particulars of this exercise, I must endeavour to convince my Reader, that this exhortation concerns all Christians, and not Ministers only. True,

it is addressed to **TIMOTHY**, a Clergyman,—but not as a Bishop, but as a Christian; and the Apostle charges this duty upon him, not because he was an Evangelist, but because he had embraced the christian faith, and had been baptized in the name of the **LORD JESUS**. This is evident from hence, because what is here spoken to **TIMOTHY**, is, in other places of Scripture, enjoined on Christians in general. See *Phil.* iv. 8; *2 Pet.* i. 5, 6; *2 Pet.* iii. 11; *Colos.* iii. 12—15, &c.; *Eph.* vi. 14—18, &c.; and it would be as good a plea, that contentedness, striving against sin, loving God, reading the Holy Scriptures, meekness, patience, and a lively hope, are not virtues belonging to laymen, because they are recommended to **TIMOTHY** in these two Epistles, as to fancy that this text imports no universal obligation.

O Sirs, consider, whether these excuses will be accepted in the last day! If holiness be a Minister's duty only, what makes you repent on your death-beds, that you have not minded it more? What makes you send for us to clothe you with the garments of righteousness, when your souls are going to another world? What made the Apostles write so many Epistles to their hearers? And what made them fill their Epistles with so many pathetic exhortations? Nay, what do you come to church for? Is it only to hear us talk? Is it only to divert yourselves? Is it only to pass away the time? Is it not to learn your work? Is it not to know the task which God requires at your hands? Is it not to be acquainted with the will of God, that you may do it? And if so, you bear witness against yourselves; you condemn yourselves; you acknowledge that this Exercise is your duty as much as ours. There is never a sinner of you all, that shall dare to plead, in the great day, that ye were not persons concerned in this work, or that it was beyond your sphere. God will bear witness, and the Angels will bear witness, and the Ministers of the Gospel will bear witness, and your own conscience will bear witness, nay, the Devils themselves will bear witness, that you were told, assured, and convinced, that it was to

you that the message of grace and pardon was sent, as well as to us, and that you lay under the same obligation to holiness that we do.

Who of you desires not to be saved ? Hath any of you a mind to be damned ? Dares any of you refuse the everlasting mercy of God ? Do not you all declare, that you would fain inherit the kingdom which fades not away ? But show us one Scripture, one place in the Bible, one tittle in the word of God, that favours your plea, or allows you a different way to eternal happiness, than is appointed to the Preachers of the Gospel. And if God be resolved that all who enter into his joy shall improve their talents, and walk in the same way, all these pretences must vanish into smoke, and can be nothing else but snares of the Devil, to catch your souls, and to deprive them of that blessing which would make them equal to Angels, and, what is more, partakers of the divine nature.

So then, what the Apostle saith here to TIMOTHY, he saith unto all, “ Exercise thyself unto godliness.” And I must entreat you to look upon this exhortation, as spoken to every one of you in particular ; and to reflect on the importance of it, with as much seriousness as if ST. PAUL did at this time, from the mansions of glory, by a new commission from almighty God, call every one by your names, “ THOU THOMAS, JOHN, DANIEL, PETER, ANNE, ELIZABETH, MARY,—Exercise thyself unto godliness.” Fancy that you see the glorious Apostle standing in the clouds of heaven, and bespeaking you from the mouth of Him, who is resolved that not every one who saith to him, LORD, LORD, but those who do his will, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. Fancy you hear him cry in your ears, “ O mortal men, whom God so loved, that he gave his only-begotten SON, to the end that all that believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life ;—whom the SON of GOD is willing to deliver from sin and slavery, and the bondage of the Devil ;—for whom he suffered agonies, wounds, torments, shame, reproaches, and an ignominious death, to purchase endless glory for you ;

—every wound of JESUS calls for this Exercise ; every tear he shed is to melt you into a holy willingness to it ; his love challenges it : the pains he took for you require it ; you cannot own him for your Redeemer without it ; he cannot save you from your sins without it ; if his love be not worth this Exercise, it is worth nothing. O deluded sinners, will you slight this mercy ? Will you trample on the blood of CHRIST, undervalue his agonies, or fancy that they deserve no such Exercise ? O let not this love be your ruin ; let not this mercy be your damnation ; let not this condescension be a witness against you ! You know not what you refuse, when you refuse this Exercise. As you love yourselves ; as you tender your eternal welfare ; as you would not be counted haters of GOD, despisers of his love, and apostates from all sense of gratitude ; as you look for favour in the last day : as you hope to see the face of GOD in glory : as you desire to find mercy of the LAMB, that takes away the sins of the world :—by all that is holy and serious, by the tears of GOD’s Ministers, and, what is dearest to you, your own interest : and by all the promises and threatenings of the Gospel :—I entreat you, “ Exercise yourselves unto godliness.” Could you but look into heaven, and behold the vast armies of blessed souls in the celestial choir, there you would find none but such as did formerly, when on earth, apply themselves to this spiritual Exercise. That is the place of recompense : he that was a stranger to these Exercises on earth can expect no reward in those regions. There godliness appears in its beauty and glory :—as you expect the white robe, the royal garb, which the saints of that place do wear ; as you hope for ABRAHAM’S bosom, where now the once godly LAZARUS lies : O delay not, neglect not, to “ exercise yourselves unto godliness : ” and what these Exercises are, is the next thing I am to treat of.

THE DAILY AND CONSTANT EXERCISES OF GODLINESS
ARE THESE :

THE FIRST EXERCISE.

Pray always.

THIS Exercise is enjoined by Him, who “came to call sinners to repentance.” See *Luke* xviii. 3; 1 *Thes.* v. 17; *Eph.* vi. 18. By praying always, I mean, that we should bring ourselves to that habit of praying, to that disposition and temper, which shall put us upon praying wherever we are, whatever company we are in, and whatever we are doing, though not with our lips, yet in our lives and understandings. This is an Exercise of so much consequence, that this praying frame is one of the chief pillars and supporters of a christian life. To this purpose ST. EPHREM gives this excellent rule, “Whether you work, or are going to lie down; whether you stand still, or are on a journey; whether you eat, or drink; whether you are going to sleep, or are waking; take heed that you do not forget to pray: whether you are at church, or at home, or in the field; whether you are at a feast, or otherwise engaged; still pray, and converse with God.”

These are the prayers which TERTULLIAN calls “prayers without a retinue of words;”—fiery desires of the heart, and wishes of importunate supplication, which are shot up to heaven, wound a great way off, fly with great swiftness, keep the enemy from coming too near, and sometimes at one stroke enervate his temptations, when he approaches;—for seeing the presence of God in these ejaculations, he is struck with horror, and departs.

And this rule I earnestly entreat you to think of, and put in practice. Before any honest attempt, or enterprise, say in thy mind,—“LORD, establish thou the work of our hands upon us; or if it may not tend to thy glory, let it not succeed according to my desires.” If thy design be

honest and lawful, why shouldest thou be loth to recommend thy endeavours to the conduct of Providence? Try it, and thou wilt find what comfort it will yield in the end. When thou hearest the clock strike, let thy mind immediately mount up to heaven, and say,—“**LORD**, so teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.” When thou art dressing thyself,—“**Clothe** my soul with salvation; and deck me with white raiment, that the shame of my nakedness may not appear.” When washing thy hands and face,—“**Cleanse** my soul by the blood of **JESUS**, and purify my heart from all iniquity.” When walking,—“**O LORD**, cause me to walk in the way of thy testimonies; and let me not wander from thy commandments.” When in company,—“**O** when will that joyful day come, in which my soul shall be gathered to the innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to the spirits of just men made perfect!” When writing,—“**LORD**, put thy laws in my heart, and write them upon my mind.” When reading,—“**O** make me to understand the way of thy precepts, so shall **I** talk of thy wondrous works.” When rising,—“**O** let me awake unto righteousness, and arise from the dead, that **CHRIST** may give me light.” When lying down,—“**O** cause me to lie down in the green pastures of thy mercy; and lead me beside the still waters of thy comforts.” When kindling a fire,—“**O** shed abroad thy love in my heart; and raise such flames within, as may burn up all my dross.” When lighting a candle,—“**O** give me the spirit of wisdom and understanding; and enlighten mine eyes, that **I** may see what is the hope of my calling.” When eating or drinking,—“**O** let it be my meat and drink to do thy will; feed me with the bread which came down from heaven; and give me to drink of that water, whereof whoever drinks, shall never thirst again.” When riding out,—“**O** thou that ridest upon the wings of the wind, show thyself; conquer my corruptions; and trample all my sins under thy feet.” When taking the air,—“**Come, HOLY SPIRIT,**

blow upon my garden, that the spices may flow out ; make my mind calm, serene, and quiet ; breathe upon me, and revive me with the light of thy countenance." When visiting a sick neighbour,—“ O do thou make all his bed in his sickness ; give me grace to speak a word in season to him ; and cause all thy goodness to pass before him." When beholding trees, and plants, and flowers,—“ LORD, how wonderful are all thy works ! in wisdom hast thou made them all ; the earth is full of thy riches. O make me as a tree planted by the rivers of water, which may bring forth its fruit in due season." When going to speak to a great man,—“ Over-awe me with thy presence, LORD ; that I may not comply with any evil, but may fear thee more than men." When going by water,—“ O satisfy my soul with the fatness of thy house ; and make me to drink of the river of thy pleasures." When buying or selling,—“ LORD, enable me to keep a conscience void of offence towards GOD and towards man." When standing in thy shop,—“ How amiable are thy tabernacles, LORD of Hosts ! O let me ever love the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth." When hearing thy neighbour curse, or swear,—“ O LORD, lay not this sin to his charge : Father, forgive him, for he knows not what he doth." When hearing any good of thy friend or acquaintance,—“ O let him grow in grace, and go on from virtue to virtue ; and make him fruitful in every good word and work." When seeing any one that is blind, or lame, or dumb,—“ O LORD, make these distressed creatures amends for these defects ; make the eye of their faith quicker, their inward man stronger, and their hope more lively ; and visit them more powerfully with thy salvation." When looking upon a dunghill,—“ O make me to know myself, and discover to me my false, deceitful heart, and the odiousness and loathsomeness of my sins, that I may hate them with a perfect hatred." When beholding the sun,—“ O thou Sun of Righteousness, rise upon me with healing under thy wings, and warm my soul with thy radiant beams, that I may love thee better than father and mother,

better than all that is dear to me here below." When looking upon a house,—“O my God, make me to be in love with that city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. O when shall this earthly house of my tabernacle be dissolved, and I received into that building of God, the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” When seeing other men laugh at any sin,—“LORD, let rivers of tears run down my eyes, because men keep not thy law; O give me such tenderness of heart, that I may be concerned at other men’s sins, as well as mine own.” When beholding any children,—“O LORD, out of the mouths of babes and sucklings do thou prepare praises unto thyself; let these children grow up as the lilies, and spread their branches as the cedars of Lebanon.” When going to visit a friend,—“LORD, make him thy friend; and that he may be so, encourage and assist him to do whatsoever thou commandest him.” When reproved,—“LORD, let this reproof be as an excellent oil to me; give me grace to take it in good part; let my soul thrive by it; let it heal my wounds; and make me thankful for this opportunity.” When receiving any injury, or ill language,—“O JESUS, give me grace to follow thy example, and to tread in thy steps; who, being reviled, didst not revile again, and when thou was threatened, sufferedst it, committing thyself to him that judgeth righteously.” When seeing it snow,—“Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.” When seeing it rain,—“O visit me with the former and latter rain of thy favour; and make my heart rich with thy showers, that I may bring forth the fruits of the SPIRIT.” When despised for righteousness’ sake,—“O let me esteem the reproach of CHRIST greater riches than all the treasures of the world.” When it thundereth,—“O LORD, the power of thy thunder who can understand! Let the world take notice of the voice of God, and the inhabitants of the earth learn righteousness.”

Sirs, if ever you would learn to converse with God, or

to have your conversation in heaven ; if ever you would get a foretaste of the joys to come ; if ever you would make religion your business ; if ever you would conquer the lusts of the flesh ; if ever you would extinguish vain and evil thoughts ; if ever you would arrive at a sound mind, and that inward and spiritual worship of God, without which CHRIST says none can please him ; if ever you would learn to conquer temptations ; if ever you would have your souls become strong and vigorous in the ways of God ;—this is the way, even this “ Praying without ceasing.” This is the best antidote against sin, the best medicine to cure all spiritual diseases : and it doth not hinder you in the works of your calling, but rather furthers and sanctifies them.

THE PRAYER.

O GOD, gracious and merciful, who givest power to the weak, and strength to the feeble ; who knowest the backwardness of my heart, and the unwillingness of my soul to engage in spiritual duties ; who understandest all my wants, and art acquainted with all my weaknesses ; behold how loth my soul is to have her conversation in heaven, and what excuses my flesh makes to hinder my mind from frequent addresses to thy mercy-seat. I entreat thee to apply thy healing hand to my sickly soul, and to fill it with spiritual desires. O give me a praying spirit, and let my soul follow hard after thee ! Teach me to make a spiritual use of every thing, and instruct me to see the Creator in the creature. LORD, free my spirit from the bondage of the flesh, that it may mount up cheerfully to thy throne. Direct my mind to look up in all my actions ; and let me take notice of the operations of thy hand in all occurrences. Let thy good SPIRIT help my infirmities, and, when I know not what to say, suggest unto me how to fill my mouth with arguments. Acquaint me with the art of extracting good out of every thing. O that I had

that spiritual temper, which might incline me to think of God, whenever I behold the works of Creation and Providence. O let no company be so pleasing to me as thine! Make me to embrace all opportunities of reflecting on thy perfections and excellencies. Thou hast both commanded and promised spiritual wisdom: O bestow upon me that excellent gift, that I may know how to glorify thee in this world, and attain at last that glory which thou hast promised to them that overcome, and continue faithful unto death, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD.

THE SECOND EXERCISE.

Every Morning, when we have paid our homage to God, by Prayer and Thanksgiving, let us solemnly resolve to tie ourselves to certain rules of living that day.

THIS Exercise is recommended to us in *Psal.* xvii. 3, 4; lxxvi. 11; lvii. 7, 8; and cxix. 101, 106. To this purpose, PLINY saith of the Christians in TRAJAN'S time, that they used to bind themselves by an oath in the morning, before they went to their business, not to sin, not to cheat, not to lie, not to steal, not to keep any thing unjustly from their neighbours. And this Exercise was observed, many hundred years before that time, by DAVID. See *Psal.* v. 3; which our translation renders, "In the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up:" but the import of the original is thus: "In the morning I do order, or dispose myself to thee, or towards thee, as a man from a high tower watches and observes the motion of the enemy." Our translation reaches DAVID'S sense well enough; but it doth not so *fully* express it as it might have done. He had, in the foregoing words, spoken of his prayer in the morning;

and behold what he presently 'subjoins to that duty : " When I have done this, I then resolve how to order my conversation that day, and how I may please God ; and consider how I may best watch against those corruptions which do most easily beset me." The truth is, that men who run abroad abruptly, without any previous consideration of what they mean to do for their souls that day, must needs continue strangers to that spiritual life to which our profession obliges us ; for this makes them rush into sin, as the horse rushes into the battle, having no bridle to restrain, no curb to keep them in order, no solemn resolutions upon their souls, to check and govern them. Therefore, before I venture upon any worldly business, let me solemnly resolve, in the presence of ALMIGHTY GOD, " This day I seriously intend thus and thus to behave myself, by the assistance of ALMIGHTY GOD. I resolve, if a neighbour should be very angry or insolent with me, to answer him with meekness and gentleness. If I meet with success in my business, as soon as I come home, I will enter into my chamber, and praise the great Giver of every good thing. If I am tempted to go into company, and have reason to suspect that they will draw me into sin, I will refuse to go, though they revile and abuse me never so much ; or if I go into any company, I will speak but little, or endeavour to divert any vain discourse to better subjects. If my servants, or my children, do things indecent or unlawful, I will reprove them with tenderness and compassion. If I am asked a question, which I know not how to answer readily, without telling a lie, I am resolved either to be silent, or to take time to consider of an answer, that I may not be surprised into an untruth."

¶ If I resolve thus, before I set about any of my secular affairs, I set up a kind of Remembrance-Office in my soul ; and constitute a monitor in my conscience, that will put me in mind of my obligations, and pull me back, when my appetite would push me on to sin.

Where people venture out, without putting "on this

armour of **GOD**, this shield of faith, and this breast-plate of righteousness; no wonder if they expose themselves to the fiery darts of the Devil, and to the insolence of that roaring lion, who walks about seeking whom he may devour. Such souls lie open to his incursions; and, having no hedge to fence them, “the boar out of the wood doth waste them, and the wild beast of the field devours them.” (*Psal.* lxxx. 13.) Such resolutions in the morning are a wall about the soul; and the Devil cannot easily climb it. Such resolutions show, that we do not take up religion out of custom, but upon serious deliberation, and persuasion that it is the one thing needful; a temper, without which **GOD** rejects our service, hides his face from our customary devotions, and gives them no other welcome but this, “Who hath required this at your hands?”

Sirs, you purpose in a morning to despatch such and such of your worldly affairs that day; why should you not purpose to do something for **GOD**, or for your souls, every day? How come your spiritual concerns to deserve so little care? Why must ye be slovenly and careless in this particular? Is not your soul more than your trade, and your eternal welfare more than a livelihood on earth? Why, of all things, must your souls and your **GOD** be neglected? **LABAN** was more concerned for his **GOD** than for his sheep and oxen: shall an idolater mind his idol more, than you the great **GOD** of heaven and earth? You complain that you cannot conquer your corruptions: How should you conquer when you do not strive? How should you strive, if you enter into no holy purposes, to arm yourselves against the sins of the day? Are corruptions blown away with a breath; or lusts, that are deeply rooted, expelled with sighs and wishes? Did you ever know cedars fall with the touch of a hand? Or did ever children with a switch strike a sturdy oak out of its place? Will your sins leave you when you do not think of them? Do you think that the Devil values your souls as little as yourselves? Or do you fancy that “the strong man” will leave his habitation, except you come against him

with swords and axes? “Canst thou draw Leviathan with a hook, or his tongue with a cord which thou lettest down? Canst thou put a hook into his nose, or bore his jaw through with a thorn? Wilt thou play with him as with a bird? Or wilt thou bind him for thy maidens?” .

With what face can you confess your sins at night, when your consciences tell you, that you did nothing to prevent them; that you left yourselves naked, and exposed to the assault of temptations, and would take no measures to preserve you from the infection? What do you confess your sins for, but to be better? And if to be better, how is it possible you should be so, unless you guard your souls, by such holy purposes, the next day? Do you make no more than a formality of it? Do you think that GOD will be put off with shadows, and the ALMIGHTY imposed upon with counterfeit devotion? Have you lived so long under the Gospel, and learned CHRIST no better? Have you conversed with Ministers so long, and are you no better scholars? The Devil himself cannot but smile, to see how ridiculously you go to work; to see you content yourselves with the bare confession, and take no care to tear the pernicious weeds from your hearts. If therefore you would not make a jest of religion; if you would not turn your duties into ridicule; for GOD’s sake enter into protestations against your sins every morning, lest you increase your guilt, and add sin unto sin.

THE PRAYER.

O THOU who dwellest in the heavens, and yet humblest thyself to behold the ways of the children of men:—thou hast been graciously pleased to reveal thy will to me, and given me rules to walk by; rules, which if a man follow, he shall live for ever. How sweet are thy testimonies! They enlighten the eyes, and give understanding to the simple. How glorious is that soul in thy sight, which

makes thy will a lantern to her feet, and a light unto her paths! LORD, in these pleasant paths I desire to walk; there is nothing like them. They end in peace. I read of those who have found it so. Thy SPIRIT inflamed their souls. They ventured their lives to attain unto it. O the serenity, O the calmness of mind, O the inward joy, which they found while walking in the paths of righteousness! Why should not I taste of this Tree of Life, and live, as well as they! This, O LORD, I often think of, and see great loveliness in it: But my will is weak, my resolution faint: when I resolve, I meet with waves and billows, that overpower those resolutions. O Thou whose power is infinite, open thy store-house, and furnish me with weapons to defend myself against all assaults from the world and the Devil! O strengthen these feeble knees: hold up these weary hands! I desire to follow thee; let thy SPIRIT lift me up, and cause me to run. Touch my will with thy sceptre, that it may bow to thy commands. Manifest thy power in my weakness; give me courage to purpose, and to fulfil my purposes. When my will would start back like a broken bow, come in with thy salvation. Endue me with power from on high. Through thee I shall do valiantly; through thee I shall be able to overcome all difficulties. O leave not my soul in misery! Send from above and take me; draw me out of many waters; send out thine arrows, and scatter my vain imaginations. With thee I will run through a troop; by my GOD will I leap over a wall. Quicken me, O LORD, for thy name's sake; and for thy righteousness' sake, bring my soul out of trouble. Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my GOD. Thy SPIRIT is good; lead me into the land of uprightness, for thy mercy's sake, and for CHRIST's sake. Amen.

THE THIRD EXERCISE.

Every Day spend half an hour, or some such time, in thinking of some good thing.

THIS Exercise is insisted on in this chapter, (1 *Tim.* iv. 15,) and in *Psal.* i. 2, and *Phil.* iv. 8. I mention *half an hour*, because it is not easily to be conceived, how any meditation can be effectual, or do good to the soul, if men do not think it worth bestowing so much time at least upon it. And there is such great variety of spiritual objects, that every day we may fix upon a theme; and, with the day, change the subject of our contemplation.

ON SUNDAY, we may let our hearts dwell on the everlasting Kingdom of Heaven, and the glory of the world to come:—Who they are, that shall enjoy it, and on what terms that crown may be obtained: The transcendency of that felicity, above all that the world can call rich, and beautiful, and glorious: How pleasant that life will be, free from hunger and thirst, and cold and nakedness; from all possibility of sin, and danger; from death, and sorrow, and sadness; from anxiety, corruption, and perturbation; from changes, and sickness, and weakness, and infirmities; from fear, and storms, and tempests; from the assaults of the world, the flesh, and the Devil: How full of love and delight it will be: how sweetly the weary soul will rest in the bosom of everlasting mercy: How glorious a sight the New Jerusalem will be: How reviving a spectacle, to behold the guard-royal of angels, shining in robes of light; the noble army of martyrs; the goodly fellowship of patriarchs, and prophets; and what is more, CHRIST, as man, glorified with his Father's glory, shining like the sun in his meridian lustre, and saying to his triumphant

church. "Behold, thou art fair, my love: thou hast ravished my heart! Who is she that looks forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners? Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honey-comb: honey and milk are under thy tongue: and the smell of thy tongue is like the smell of Lebanon."

As meditation and prayer are never so useful, as when they shine in conjunction: so this, as well as the following meditations, being seconded with holy aspirations, will have more effect upon the soul. Of these aspirations I shall give some patterns.

I. -- O God! thou most sweet, thou most lovely object! How little do those glorified saints, who enjoy thee in the other world, regard our little pleasures and satisfactions here! O that my soul were with those spirits of men made perfect! I see nothing in this valley of tears worth desiring. The beatitude to come is that which I long for. What are the glories of this world, to that glory which ere long shall be revealed in us! The magnificence of triumphs, the pomp of princes, the curiosity of palaces, the beauty of the sun, the brightness of the moon, the glittering of the stars, the variety of flowers, the fragrancy of herbs,—what are all these to the joys at thy right hand! One day in thy courts is sweeter than a thousand here. There I shall behold the perfection of thy essence, the infinity of thy nature, the immensity of thy grandeur, the eternity of thy duration, the greatness of thy majesty, the stability of thy throne, the vast extent of thy wisdom, the abyss of thy judgments, the sweets of thy bounty, the tenderness of thy mercy, the severity of thy justice, the latitude of thy power, the charms of thy beauty, and the lustre of thy glory! O what a ravishing sight will this be! And shall I be afraid of encountering those enemies, that would keep me from seeing these wonderful objects? These enemies are already conquered. The Lion of the Tribe of Judah hath already weakened their strength, which makes my victory more easy; therefore I will not despair. O thou, who hast promised that when the poor and needy want water, thou the God of Israel

wilt hear them ; hear me from thy holy heaven, and encourage my soul to force her way through all difficulties. Give me lively apprehensions of that state. For want of those lively apprehensions, I work not, I move not, I press not forward, I act not like a person that is in good earnest ; my endeavours are dull, and my attempts feeble. O write that bliss upon my mind, and engrave it on my soul ; let the beams of it warm my spirit, so that no labour for heaven may seem hard, no commandment grievous, no exercise troublesome, no industry tedious, no pains too great, no journey too long ; that I may not murmur, that I may not complain of difficulties, that I may not be weary, that I may not faint in my mind. It is not only a glorious garment, not only a magnificent house, not only a stately palace, that is promised me ; but glory itself. What if I must curb my passions, and break through my sinful inclinations ? What if I must withdraw mine affections from the creature, and mortify my body ? What if I must submit my will to thy will, and pardon the greatest injuries ? What if I must give law to my tongue, prescribe limits to my thoughts, and put a restraint upon my foolish desires ? Is not the promised recompence encouragement enough ? O my God ! Thou art my shield and exceeding great reward ; and shall I be afraid to see thee ? Shall I tremble at the work thou settest me ? Will not thy wages be infinitely beyond my labour ? How short will be my task, and how long my rest ! How few will be the days I am to work in, and how durable my repose ! O shine powerfully upon my soul, that I may be insatiable in my desires, and long to see thee, who art light itself, and in thy light may see light, through JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. Amen."

II. " O most happy, most blessed, and most glorious God ! How can I reflect on the Rest of this day, without summoning my thoughts to survey the nobler Rest, whereof this present is but an emblem ! I have gone this day with the multitude to the house of God ; but what is this to the company I shall ere long meet in heaven, if I imitate them here ? Happy society ! where is no chaff among the corn,

no tares among the wheat, no thistles among the roses ! Where all are children of God, all are kings, all are saints, all are full of grace and glory, all are wise, all courteous, all affable, all adorned with celestial qualities ! If I take such pleasure in the conversation of a wise man here, what delight shall I take in the company of the holiest souls, that want nothing, but abound in knowledge, in wisdom, and in sanctity ! How do I admire men of great abilities here ! In what admiration then will my soul be, when it shall converse with persons decked with the light of God's glory ; who know all things without reading, understand the greatest mysteries without studying, and comprehend the abstrusest things without labour ; whose memory never decays, who know without error, apprehend without doubting, understand with assurance, and perceive with the greatest evidence ; who can resolve all difficulties, answer all questions, and think and speak nothing but truth ; whose minds know no darkness, whose understandings are free from clouds, and whose knowledge is eternal ! How can they but know the deep things of God, when God is the glass in which they behold all mysteries ! O my God, make me in love with that place, where I shall love thee perfectly, where I shall be eternally united to thee, where I cannot but love thee, cannot but embrace thee, and cannot but be ravished with thee for ever ! If they who, running in a race, strive for the mastery, are temperate in all things, shall not I be so ? If they mortify themselves to gain a corruptible crown, shall not I do so to gain an incorruptible one ? What pains do ungodly sinners take to get to hell, and shall not I be at some to get to heaven ? O Lord, let it never be said of me, that I valued thy heaven less than other men do the Devil's kingdom ! Thou offerest me the honour of reigning with thee for ever ; and, in order thereunto, requirest nothing of me, but to reign over myself on this side of heaven ! Thou biddest me rule my lusts, and shall I indulge them ? Thou biddest me curb my vain desires, and shall I cherish them in my bosom ? Thou biddest me triumph over my flesh, and shall I set it

on the throne? Thou biddest me subdue my worldly inclinations, and shall I give them entertainment? How great are the glories thou intendest me! And shall I deprive myself of them, out of love to slavery and bondage? O give me courage to command myself! My LORD, teach me so to rule my outward and inward man, that I may reign at last with thee for ever, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD. Amen."

On MONDAY, we may reflect on the Last Judgment:—How the LORD JESUS, notwithstanding the seeming delay, shall be ere long revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, to take vengeance on them that know not GOD, and obey not the Gospel of our LORD JESUS CHRIST! How the King of heaven will then sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him will be gathered all nations, and how he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats; how he will set the sheep on his right hand, and the goats on the left; and say to them on his right hand, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world;" but to them on the left, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels:" How different men's apprehensions of GOD's mercy and justice will be then, from what they are now: What amazement the careless world will be in then; how those men that spend their days in jollity, and brutish pleasures now, will then be forced into despair, and be ready to tear themselves, and call to rocks and mountains, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the LAMB:" How all things then will look with another face: How the humble and self-denying Christian, that is now the off-scouring of the world, will then be exalted above all heavens, and seated on the same throne with the SON OF GOD; and how all those mighty nothings, that laugh now at the religious

soul, will tremble in that day, like an aspen-leaf, and wish that they had considered the things which belonged to their everlasting peace.

And this meditation may be watered with such aspirations as follow.

I. "Almighty Judge of the world, before whom all mankind must ere long appear; righteous art thou in all thy ways, and holy in all thy works. If the righteous shall scarcely be saved, where shall I, a poor sinner, appear?—I who have so long and so frequently neglected my duty, delayed my repentance, undervalued thy mercies, despised thy patience, and abused the riches of thy grace! O LORD! how watchful should I be over myself, if the terrors of the great day of account appeared to me in lively characters! O dreadful day, when I, a poor wretch, must stand before thy tribunal, and see myself surrounded with legions of Angels, all expecting to hear what my sentence will be! This day I have frequently in my mouth; but O that my soul were more solemnly affected with the consideration of it! I should not then lead so easy and so soft a life; I should then spend more time in weeping and praying; I should then be afraid of defiling my soul with the least spot of sin. LORD JESUS! look upon me, and let me feel thy power in my soul. Come, LORD! represent that day to my mind in all its terrors and circumstances, that I may make haste to enter into thy rest. The Judge is at the door; let me bring presents to Him that ought to be feared; and since no gift is so pleasing to thee, as a heart entirely devoted to thy service, O persuade me, O assist me, to mind the one thing necessary, and to choose the better part, which may never be taken away from me, for thy name's sake, for thy mercy's sake, and for thy merit's sake. Amen."

II. "O Thou omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent Being, who hast appointed a day wherein thou wilt judge the secrets of men's hearts, and all their words, and actions, and desires, by thy Gospel: I believe that this day will come,—a day when pure hearts will be esteemed more

than eloquent speeches, and a good conscience will go farther than purses of gold. Thou, LORD, givest me frequent warnings of the approaches of this day. My conscience puts me in mind of it. The sicknesses and calamities, which thou sendest upon me, tell me of it. O my GOD, who art not tired with the prayers of thy servants, nor displeased with the importunities of thy children; it is the desire of my soul to be enlivened and awakened into such a sense of this approaching day, that to-day, while I hear thy voice, I may not harden my heart. I have delayed my serious care of happiness too long! O that mine eyes were fountains of tears, to weep for this neglect! I am sensible I must not trifle any longer. I must not defer a concern of such importance to another day. O my GOD, let me admire thy patience, that I have lived unto this hour; and accept of my sacrifice of the remainder of my days, which I humbly consecrate to thee, with faith and love in CHRIST JESUS. O let this future judgment overawe my careless soul, when I speak, when I think, when I follow my lawful calling, when I am in company, when I am alone, when I walk, when I sit, when I stand; and let me ever fear that Judge who hath power to destroy both soul and body in hell, so that both my soul and body may be preserved from damnation, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD. Amen."

On TUESDAY, we may take GOD's various Mercies and Providences into serious consideration:—What preservations, what deliverances, we have met with, what care GOD hath taken of us from time to time: How he hath been with us, when we have gone through the water, and when we have passed through the fire, and hath commanded the flames not to kindle upon us: How ready he hath been to assist us in the fiery furnace: How miraculously he hath appeared in our rescue: When the fig-tree hath not blossomed, when there hath been no fruit in the vine, when the labour of the olive hath failed, and when all

creature-comforts have ceased, how often he hath been our strength, our portion, our refuge, and our hiding-place: How beneficial such a providence hath been to us; what good we have got by such an affliction; how excellent the designs of **GOD** are in the troubles he sends upon us; how much safer an afflicted condition is, than a prosperous one: How kind he hath been, in causing us to be born in a christian country, and educated in a religion free from gross errors: what a mercy his word, his Gospel, and all his laws and revelations are: What assistances, what comforts, what checks of conscience, what motions of **GOD'S SPIRIT** we have found; and how **GOD** hath done more for us than we have been able to think, or to express.

Even this speculation will turn to excellent nourishment, if joined with such ejaculations as these.

I. “**O LORD!** how wonderful are all thy works; in wisdom hast thou made them all; the earth is full of thy riches! What a monument am I of thy mercy! How kind hast thou been to this miserable creature! How am I bound to magnify thy goodness! How excellent, how vast, how diffusive is it! It is not confined to a day, nor restrained to a place, nor limited to an hour! From my cradle unto this moment I have been preserved by Thee; and tasted how gracious thou art. Thou hast carried me on thy wings, as the eagle doth her young. Through the various stages of my life, what miracles of Providence have mine eyes beheld! How hath thy Providence been at work for me, while I have been asleep, while I have been thinking, and contriving something else,—even how to derogate from thy glory! Truly, **LORD!** thy mercy and patience ought to be my song in the house of my pilgrimage! This I have reason to boast of, to speak of, to meditate of, day and night; by that I subsist, by that I am supported, fed, maintained, and preserved from the hands of the Devil. O let thy mercy melt my heart! O let mercy prevail with me to give up myself to thee! Let mercy and goodness constrain me to love thee! Give me that generous temper, that noble

spirit, that thy goodness may do more with me than threatenings, and hell, and everlasting torments. Let thy love oblige me to run in the way of thy commandments. Let these be greater motives with me to do thy will, than all the terrors of the burning lake. O let thy love be of such force in my soul, that I may not be able to resist its motions, but, by the strength of it, may hope, believe, endure, deny myself, and love and obey thee, to the end of my days, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD. Amen."

II. "Great Governor and Disposer of the world, thou hast promised, to them that love thee, so to order all things, that they shall all conspire to the good which thou hast intended, and dost intend for me, by the various dispensations which mine eyes have seen. The various spiritual and temporal blessings that have been conferred upon me, what have they been, but motives to be enamoured with the Best of Beings? Thou knowest, that if I depart from thee, or love any thing better than thee, I run away from mine own happiness; and therefore so many tokens and expressions of thy love are sent to me, to unite my heart to thee, to preserve me in thy fear, and to uphold my goings in thy paths. O wise, O gracious, O bountiful Master, kinder to me than I am to myself, let me find the good thou designest for me in thy numberless blessings; let my heart grow stronger under thy favours, warmer in thy sun-shine, and more fervent under these beams. The very afflictions thou sendest me are intended for my good. I have found it, I have seen it, I have known it by experience. I have learned by afflictions that repentance, humility, submission, and fear of sinning, which I should never have learned by prosperity. When I have thought that great wrong was done me by the contempt, reproach, and trouble, which others have thrown upon me, thou hast let me see, that this was to make me reflect on the affronts and indignities which I have put upon thee, my best friend. O let me never mistrust thy Providence. Whatever befalls me, let me believe that I shall see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living, and let me not be

disappointed of my hope, through **JESUS CHRIST** our **LORD**. Amen."

ON **WEDNESDAY** we may take a view of our **Death**, and the hour of our departure out of this world:—How certain death is: how frail our lives: how soon this frame may be dissolved: how easy a thing dispatches us: How the approaches of death have made the stoutest sinner tremble; how dreadful it will be to those, who have set their hearts upon the riches and pleasures of this world: and how wise a thing it is to prepare for it, before the evil days come: How joyful it will be, if it find us prepared for the stroke, and fitted for that life, into which we must enter when we quit this: How welcome death is to a holy soul; and how cheerfully a pious man can say, "LORD, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace:" How upon our death there depends eternity: How foolish it is to slight grace and mercy, till death forces us to wish for them: How death will mar our beauty, deface our glory, and lay all our grandeur in the dust: How death is the birth-day of a sincere believer, brings him into a new world,—a world of joys, and endless satisfactions,—and is to him an entrance into Paradise, and a door into the garden of Eden, where no good shall be absent, and no evil present.

And even these thoughts will be more effectual, if the pious desires, which follow, be added.

I. "O THOU, in whose hand is the power of life and death, who art immortal, invisible, and blessed for evermore! Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever the earth and the world were made, thou art **GOD**: from everlasting to everlasting thou art **HE**. I am a frail, dying creature; and though I carry an immortal soul about me, yet the vessel, in which that glorious guest abides, will soon decay, and turn to dust: and how soon, I know not. I admire thy wisdom in concealing the day and hour of my death from me: I am sensible that it is done to hasten my repentance to keep me from adding sin to sin, to

restrain me from the vanities of this world, to make me think of a better, and to secure that happy life which shall be after death ! And O that my death might be ever before me ! How great are the things that depend upon it !—two great eternities, whereof one of them will certainly fall to my share ! O let my death be my daily meditation ; that I may prevent my everlasting death ! What a miserable creature should I be, if my soul should leave this body, to go into a more dismal prison, from whence there is no returning ! O make me wise ; O let me understand what preparation is necessary for that hour ; teach me to undervalue the world, and to mind the things which are above, that when I come to die, I may die with joy, and cheerfully resign my soul into the hands of my Creator. Let lust, and pride, and anger, die in me, before I die ; that they may not endanger my soul after death. Let me converse with death more ; that I may die to sin more, and live more to Him that died for me. Let the thoughts of death mortify in me whatever is offensive to thy holiness. In all my actions, let me remember my latter end ; that my death may be my gain, and my departure out of this world an entrance into a better, through JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. Amen.”

II. “O GOD, to whom belong the issues of life and death ! Naked came I from my mother’s womb, naked shall I return thither. What is my life but a vapour, which appears for a while, and then vanishes away ! What should make me enamoured with this life ? At the best, it is a warfare ; within are tumults, without are fightings. I am in a continual state of war here with temptations to covetousness, passion, pride, ambition, or carnal lusts ; with allurements of the world ; or with suggestions of the Devil : when one sin is beaten away, another rises ; the discontents and vexations, the troubles and the disappointments, which I meet with, are innumerable. And can I delight to dwell in such a valley of tears, surrounded with so many snares, encompassed with so many dangers ? Should not this make me desirous to be gone ? O my God, make me willing to

leave this world! Take away from me the fear of death. Why should I fear, when my great Master hath overcome this King of Terrors? I will follow my REDEEMER; I will conform to his example; I will tread in his steps; this is my resolution, this the firm purpose of my soul! And why should I doubt of his assisting me! Why should not I be confident, that my death will be a passage from mortality to immortality, from corruption to incorruption, from trouble and misery to rest and tranquillity? Death is the way to the kingdom of heaven. I cannot inherit it, except I die. Do I long for that kingdom, and shall I be afraid of the way that leads to it? I must die. O JESUS! let me die contentedly. Let death be my choice. Let me embrace it in preference to this miserable life, that after death I may live with thee for ever. Amen."

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ON FRIDAY, we may cast our eyes upon the Passion and Death of CHRIST:—How he was mocked, derided, crowned with thorns, and crucified, to purchase an eternal redemption for us: What a wonderful love it was to suffer all this for enemies, that they might be reconciled to GOD: What a dreadful spectacle it was, to see infinite majesty humbled, infinite beauty defaced, infinite happiness tormented, and eternity dying, and dropping into the grave: What patience, what meekness, what submission, what gentleness he expressed under all those injuries, in order to show us an example, and to oblige us to follow his steps! How heavy the burden of our sins was, that could make the SON OF GOD cry out, "My GOD, my GOD, why hast thou forsaken me?" What a mighty motive his love is, to love him fervently; and how inexcusable that man makes himself, who believes this love, and yet will not be persuaded by it to obey and conform to CHRIST's will:

How mysterious this love is, that the sinner should transgress, and the righteous be punished for him; that the innocent should suffer for the guilty, the judge for the malefactor, the master for the servant, **GOD** for man: What ingratitude it must be, to trample on the blood of **CHRIST**, or put him to open shame again, or to make light of salvation, when **GOD** hath purchased it at so dear a rate: How by his death we live, by his stripes we are healed, by his wounds we are cured, by his reproaches we are advanced to glory, and by his being made a curse for us, we escape the curse of the **Law**: How we have all the reason in the world to count all things dross and dung in comparison of Him; to delight in him, to love him, to prefer him before the world, and to follow the **LAMB**, whithersoever he goes.

Who can reflect on all this, and not think himself obliged to address the **SON OF GOD** in such pious thoughts as these.

I. “ Great **SAVIOUR** of the world, who wast wounded for my transgressions, and bruised for my sins! Thou art that immaculate **LAMB**, who for sinners, enemies, and condemned creatures, gavest thy back to the smiter, and sufferedst thyself to be beaten, crowned with thorns, mocked, derided, and inhumanly abused;—a love fitter to be admired in silence, than praised with imperfect expressions! How freely didst thou part with thy blood, to save my life, and to procure my safety! Never was blood spilt upon such an account; or if there were, never was such precious blood spilt as thine was,—blood which drives away Devils, invites Angels, cleanses souls, purifies the tabernacle, washes the whole world, and opens the gate of heaven! Who can be so irreligious as not to be pricked at the heart with the thoughts of thy passion? Who can be so arrogant, or proud, as not to be humbled with the sight? O let thy cross have such an effect upon me, that I may crucify my flesh with all its lusts and passions! Let thy love to thine enemies prevail with me to do good to them that hate me. Let thy patience under reproaches oblige me to be silent under calumnies. Let thy love to my soul wound my heart, that I may long for thee, breathe after thee. as my greatest

comfort, think of nothing so much as of thee. value nothing so much as thee, and delight in nothing so much as in thee; for thou hast done for me beyond expectation, beyond imagination, more than father and mother ever did, more than my dearest friends ever did, more than mortal man can do. O chain my heart to thine, and let nothing separate me from thy love; but be thou mine, and let me be thine, and dwell with thee for ever. Amen."

II. "O JESUS! who hast led captivity captive, spoiled principalities and powers, made a show of them openly, and triumphed over them; how powerful was thy death, how victorious thy cross, how potent were thy agonies, how effectual thy sufferings! Thy cross is my conquest. At that Devils tremble; and they who are not afraid of splendid palaces, are afraid of the tree on which thy sacred body was stretched out. How shall sin reign any longer in my body, after such compassion? Shall not I blush, after such mercy, to offend that friend who died for me? Shall I reward evil for good, or dare to act against thee any more, who hast conquered my greatest enemies for me? They would have swallowed me up quick; but thou camest to my rescue, and wouldest not let me perish by their fury. I can plead no more that sin, the Devil, or the world, are not conquerable, for thou hast made them so. They have lost their power: and a poor Christian can make even Devils flee away. O let the world be for ever crucified to me, and me unto the world. Let me not be afraid of affliction, when my LORD and Master hath endured so much for me. I hope to share in the glories of thy crown; O let me not be ashamed to bear thy cross. O blessed JESUS! who art a guide to the blind, a way to the erring soul, a staff to the lame, a comforter to the poor, a harbour to the tossed with tempests, a counsellor to the perplexed, wisdom to the foolish, the glory of Martyrs, the joy of Angels, the foundation of the Church, the physician of the sick, meat to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, and clothes to the naked;—be thou all this to me; let thy cross supply all my wants, and in this let me glory and rejoice day and

night; that being crucified with thee here, I may be glorified with thee hereafter. Amen."

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Such Exercises as these keep the soul awake; and thus roused, it cannot be surprised into a lethargy. The foolish virgins (*Matt.* xxv.) neglected these meditations, and that made them slumber and sleep. Such daily meditations keep the soul in readiness to obey her great Master's call, in case he should summon her to judgment. They feed and strengthen her, as much as meat and drink do the body.

Christians, is your Reason a Talent, or not? If it be not, then it is no gift of God; if no gift of God, why do you thank him, why do you praise him for it? If it be, why should not you give God his own again with usury? If it be a talent, must not you give an account of it in the last day? Are you capable of thinking of such things as these; and will not your Lord ask you, whether you have made that use of your reason which he intended it for? Shall you give an account of your riches, and honour, and time, and opportunities, and liberty, and give no account of your reason? Will it serve your turn, do you think, to say, that you have employed it about the world? Is the world a fit object to engross so noble a faculty? Shall the meanest thing, which is no more than dross and dung in the sight of God, employ that power which is capable of fixing upon the noblest Being? Would you have the ALMIGHTY so unwise, or weak, or improvident, as not to demand of you an account of his goods,—what you have done with them, whether you have traded with them, and whether you have been active in your Master's business? Your reason was given you to trade with for heaven; it was given you to help you to steer your vessel steadily through the boisterous sea of the world; and will you

make no other use of it, but to think how your lusts may be gratified, how your carnal ease may be advanced, and how you may live in mirth and jollity?

You complain of ignorance. How should you increase in knowledge, if you will not meditate? How should your understanding be enlightened, if you will not make use of this candle? How can you but sit in darkness, if you refuse this torch of heaven? By this God would teach you, by this he would instruct you, by this he would communicate himself to you; but if you will not, whose fault is it? Whom can you blame? How inexcusable do you make yourselves? This would drive away the mists and clouds, that dwell upon your reason: but if you love darkness better than light, no marvel if your deeds be evil. It is with your souls in this case, as it is with your bodies, —shut your eyes, and you cannot see; so here, keep out such meditations as these, and you will not perceive the things of God.

Never complain of want of fervency for the future, while you are loth to let in such meditations into your minds. Fervency does not come from nothing; it must have some root, some foundation, some fuel, some action to give it life and being: and meditation is this root, and this foundation. This is it that must warm you: this is it that must fill your souls with hallowed flames. Keep out this, and you keep out the sun; shut the window against these beams, and you will freeze, and shake with cold. This must make the ways of God easy to you: this must make them pleasant, sweet, and amiable: this gives them charms; or rather discovers them to you: this strews the way with pearls, which make the soul enamoured with it; and thus it flies to heaven.

THE PRAYER.

O THOU, whose wisdom cannot by searching be found out, who hast made me a rational creature, and given me power to think of all thy wondrous works: what excellent

objects dost thou set before me,—objects to delight and edify my soul ! O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes ! O that my soul might ever dwell beside those still waters ! O teach me the art of meditation. Give me a large and apprehensive mind. Awaken my slumbering soul. Encourage it to fix upon adequate objects. My soul is a spirit : O let it delight in things agreeable to its nature. Since my mind must be busy about something, let it be employed in things that make for its everlasting peace. O how fickle are my thoughts, and how inconstant my contemplations ! How soon, and how easily, is my mind drawn away from spiritual things ! To thee I flee ; O hide me, save me ! Let my treasure be in heaven, that my heart may be there also. O spiritualize my affections, that they may delight to be where thou art. Let spiritual objects become amiable and charming in my eyes. Did I love them, I should think of them : were they dear and precious to me, how could I forbear contemplating them ? O let their beauty appear to me ! Take away the veil from my face, which hinders me from seeing Him that is altogether lovely. Incline mine heart to thy testimonies. Anoint mine eyes with eye-salve, that I may see greater loveliness in things that are not seen, than in those which are seen. My understanding is dark, O enlighten it. Clarify it with thy beams. Let me hate vain thoughts ; but thy law let me love. O let me not grudge the time that I spend in meditation. Assure me, that this is balsam to my soul, and that by these means the lines will fall to me in pleasant places, and I shall have a goodly heritage. The righteousness of thy testimonies is everlasting ; O give me understanding, and I shall live. There is beauty, there is satisfaction, there is life, in spiritual objects. O let me find them sweeter than honey unto my taste. Discover those riches to me ; that I may look upon them, and despise the treasures of Egypt. These are deceitful things : these allure indeed, but afford no lasting comfort. O give me a sight of that wealth, which is not liable to corruption : I shall find it in the mysteries of the Gospel. Thou

hast said, “The pure in heart shall see God.” O purify my soul from fleshly lusts which war against it, that I may see and discern what thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; and, seeing it, may long after an eternal fruition of the light of thy countenance, through JESUS CHRIST our Lord. Amen.

THE FOURTH EXERCISE.

Every day study Humility.

THIS is an Exercise peremptorily commanded in *Matt.* xviii. 3, 4: *Luke* xiv. 7, 8: *James* iv. 6. “Learn of me,” saith the SON OF GOD, “for I am meek, and lowly in heart.” (*Matt.* xi. 29.) Learn of me! What?—Not to raise the dead, not to cleanse the lepers, not to cast out Devils, not to give sight to the blind, not to make the deaf to hear, not to walk on the water; no, but learn of me humility: in this exercise yourselves daily. And indeed greater humility hath no man shown; for being “in the form of God, and thinking it no robbery to be equal with God, he humbled himself, and took upon him the form of a servant, and became obedient to the death of the cross.” He is a truly humble man, that doth despise himself, and is contented to be counted vile and wretched; that refers all the honour, done to himself, unto God, and rejoices in being despised, and despises praise and glory; that compares his sins with the good works of others, and upon that account looks upon himself as the chief of sinners: that affects no applause in what he doth for God or his neighbour: that is contented his infirmities should be known, bears injuries patiently, is glad of mean employment to show his love to God, doth not care for being known, looks upon himself as nothing, is circumspect and modest, delights not in superfluous talk, nor in laughter, fixes his eyes on the ground with the Publican,

is ashamed to lift them up to heaven, smites upon his breast, and cries, from a mighty sense of his own vileness, “**LORD**, be merciful to me a sinner;” that mistrusts himself, sets no high value on what he doth, contemns the pomp and grandeur of the world, admires nothing but **God**, and is well-pleased with being made as the filth of the world, and as the off-scouring of all things; that doth think himself unworthy of the least crumb he eats, and of the least drop of drink he drinks; and, though the circumstances he is under, and the place, office, calling, and condition he is in, bid him use discretion, in showing and expressing his humility, yet, in his mind, throws himself at the feet, not only of equals and superiors, but of inferiors too, and could be contented to wash the feet of the meanest servant of his **LORD**; that can hear a friendly check with meekness, can ask forgiveness, in case he doth unawares offend, before others, and is contented men should misconstrue his innocent words, actions, gestures, and behaviour, so that **God** doth but know the pious and holy designs he hath in them; that is contented, that those whom he loves, and in whom he trusted, and who have been kind to him, should forsake him, abandon him, and persecute him, and can bear with the ingratitude of men, to whom he hath done many good turns, and can find more satisfaction in the light of **God**’s countenance, than other men do in the favours and presents of the greatest monarchs; that can be content to see his neighbour honoured, and himself slighted; that submits to the will of **God** in all things, and “both hopes and quietly waits for the salvation of the **LORD**.”

And this is that humility which the Gospel presses, and whereof the Captain of our Salvation hath given us so illustrious an example. This is that virtue which **CASSIAN** justly calls the corner-stone of all virtues, the foundation of religion, the ladder to intimate converse with the **ALMIGHTY**, and a gift beyond that of miracles; and this is that employment which justly deserves our care, labour, and exercise.

When AUSTIN, the Monk, had summoned the British Bishops and Clergy to conform to the Church of Rome, and to yield obedience and submission to that Sec, the Britons consulted with a certain holy man. to know whether he thought it expedient for them to submit to AUSTIN or not. The good old man told them, that if they found him to be a man of GOD, and a true follower of JESUS, they should not dispute their submission; and the only way to know that, he said, was, to see and take notice whether he were a meek and humble man: if he were, it was a certain sign that he bore the yoke of CHRIST; but if stout and proud, whatever his pretences might be, he could not be of GOD. And accordingly when they found that the insolent Monk carried it with a high hand, and scarcely vouchsafed to salute them, they rejected his proud dictates, though it was with the loss of their lives.

We see how valleys are laden with fruit and corn, and enamelled with flowers, while the higher mountains remain barren and unfruitful. O Christians, did you but know what treasures lie hid in this Exercise, you would be so far from counting it troublesome, that you would be ambitious of it. In this Exercise consisteth the mystery of religion: the richest influences of heaven come down upon the soul, that looks upon herself as nothing. To her the ALMIGHTY reveals himself, and here he is ready to build tabernacles; the sweetest communications of grace are vouchsafed to him that is acquainted with this lowliness; into such a heart the joys of the HOLY GHOST flow with a spring-tide; if a man would understand the secrets of the LORD, this is the school where he may learn them; and if he become a great proficient here, he may promise himself a more than ordinary intercourse between God and his soul.

I conclude this Exercise with a passage out of a learned Jew. "The advantages of humility," saith he, "consist in six particulars; three whereof respect this present, and three the next life. 1st. It makes a man content in all condition. When any person is proud and arrogant, the whole

world is not able to satisfy his lofty thoughts ; much less that which God hath appointed for his portion : but he that is humble lives contented, and is satisfied with what Providence hath allotted him. 2dly. The humble man bears adversity patiently ; whereas the proud man's fear is great, and his patience inconsiderable, when troubles come upon him. 3dly. The humble man is grateful and acceptable to men, and men love and esteem him."—And to this purpose I must tell you a story of a King, who being asked how he came to be so great, answered, " That he never saw any man whom he did not esteem wiser than himself ; and those that he looked upon to be wiser than himself, them he ever thought to fear God more than himself : and if he met with any that was manifestly more foolish than himself, he presently reflected, that this man would have a less account to give unto God in the last day than himself : if he met with any that were older than himself, he thought that their merits must needs be greater than his own ; and if those he met with were younger than himself, he considered that their sins must needs be fewer than his own : if he met with any of his equals, their heart, thought he, in all likelihood, is better than mine ; if they were richer than himself, he considered that they did more good in the world than himself ; if poorer, that then by reason of their poverty, they must needs have more humble and contrite hearts, and therefore be better than himself."—4thly. The humble man arrives at true and solid wisdom before other men, not only because he is desirous to learn, and loves to sit at the feet of his teachers, but God also helps him to attain unto more than ordinary wisdom ; whereas the proud and haughty, being loth to learn that which crosses flesh and blood, remain ignorant of the most solid wisdom. 5thly. The humble man runs more cheerfully in the ways of God's testimonies ; boggles at nothing that God commands ; and expresses alacrity and readiness at the voice of the greatest and weightiest, as well as at the least and easiest precepts. 6thly. The humble man's devotion is the only acceptable devotion to God ; his sins are pardoned, and

his iniquities are forgiven: "For a humble and a contrite heart, O GOD, thou wilt not despise."

THE PRAYER.

O THOU lofty and Holy One, who inhabitest eternity, and dwellest in the high and holy place, and with him also that is of an humble spirit! Whither shall I go, but to thee, who hast the words of eternal life! How shall I get this humble spirit but by thy power and influence! Ah! how proud is my heart! How loth am I to submit to thy will! How loth to think ill of myself! How loth to bear injuries! How loth to converse with thy poor members! How loth to be sensible of my errors! How loth to acknowledge a fault! And yet, all this while, I believe that thou beholdest the proud afar off, and that nothing is more abominable in thy sight! How apt am I to admire myself! How apt to harbour high conceits of my endowments! How apt to hunt after the praise of men! And what is all this but wind? What is it but smoke, and air, and vanity? How suddenly do these things grow, and how suddenly do they die again! How sensual, how carnal must that soul be, that minds such things! How void of a sense of greater beauties! How little affected, how little touched with the honour that comes from GOD! How weak in grace is he who hath not learned yet to leap over such straws! This is my case, O LORD; I am that weak, that empty soul, and yet unwilling to confess that I am proud, and vain, and lifted up: pity me, O my GOD; make me sensible how far I am from the kingdom of GOD, till humility brings me nearer. Crush whatever proud thoughts and desires thou speest in me. O put me in mind of my duty, whenever any vain thoughts rise in my soul. Pull down in me all imagination that exalt themselves against CHRIST JESUS. O let not my heart be haughty, nor mine eyes lofty; neither let me exercise myself in things too high for me. Give me a

sight of my own vileness. Let me not be cheated with false colours. Let thy greatness over-awe my soul. Let the example of my Saviour work upon me. How shall I be his disciple, and think of myself above what I ought to think? Let God arise, and let all my vain conceits of mine own worth be scattered. What am I but a handful of dust? What am I but a beggar, and thy pensioner, who live upon thy charity? O let these thoughts subdue my soul. Make me as ambitious of an humble spirit, and lowly mind, as others are of the greatness and admiration of the world. O let a deep sense of my guilt humble me; then shall I, with the penitent prodigal, be welcome in my FATHER'S house, and my soul shall live, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD. Amen.

THE FIFTH EXERCISE.

Every day let us bridle our tongues, and set a watch before the doors of our lips, and take care that our speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that we may know how to answer every man.

THIS Exercise is enjoined in *Col.* iv. 6; *Eph.* iv. 25, 29; v. 3, 4; and *Matt.* xii. 34—36. It was a good observation of one, who travelled with some men that talked loosely and inconsiderately, and whom ST. ANTHONY the hermit took for excellent company; “Yes; they are good men; but the house they live in wants a door with a lock and key; for whoever pleases may go in, and take away what they possess.” His meaning was, that they took no care of their words: that the door of their lips was always open; and that they talked any thing that came into their minds. “The tongue,” saith ST. JAMES, “is a little member, but contains a world of iniquity.” (*Jam.* iii. 5, 6.) So that

the greatness of the danger enforces the necessity of this Exercise.

This Exercise consists partly in watching against the sins to which the tongue is subject ; partly in using the tongue for such discourses as are most proper for a follower of *JESUS*. The sins of the tongue are without number, yet the most remarkable are these following : 1. Blasphemy. 2. Murmuring. 3. Defending our sins. 4. Perjury. 5. Lying. 6. Detraction. 7. Accusing others falsely. 8. Much speaking. 9. Idle words. 10. Profane jesting, or abusing Scripture. 11. Indiscreet expressions. 12. Railing. 13. Quarrelling. 14. Laughing at, and deriding, those that are serious. 15. Evil counsel. 16. Sowing of discord among neighbours. 17. Cursing, and customary swearing. 18. Flattery. 19. Double-tongued dealings. 20. False reports. 21. Boasting, and speaking in one's own praise. 22. Revelation of a secret. In vain doth he pretend to exercise himself unto godliness, who watches not against these sins : or who, seeing himself in danger of running into them, steps not back, and climbs up with his thoughts to heaven, as he that sees a wild beast coming towards him, climbs up into a tree to secure himself.

There is hardly any precept either more spoken of, or recommended more, either by the **HOLY GHOST** in Scripture, or by holy, wise, and sober men, than this watching over our tongues : for indeed, “ By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.” Before the power of godliness was turned into a form, the Christians studied this point with such care and assiduity, and became such proficient in it, that men might converse with them, and keep their company a week together, and not hear one idle word drop from them, but what was to the use of edifying, and ministered grace unto the hearers. And till men come to believe that their tongues are not their own, but **GOD'S**, who made them, and designed them for the noblest uses, and must therefore be employed as he shall think fit to direct, they are yet far from the kingdom

of God, and aliens from the commonwealth of saints, who are to be heirs of salvation. He knows not what self-denial means, that doth not deny himself in speaking things which the HOLY GHOST hath forbid ; and he that cannot speak, but he must offend in one or other of the afore-mentioned particulars, had better hold his tongue. It was therefore excellent advice which ST. AMBROSE gave to his people : “ Let us learn to hold our tongues, that we may be able to speak ; why shouldst thou run thyself into danger of condemnation, when by silence thou mayest be infinitely safer ? I have seen thousands run into sin by speaking ; but few by holding their peace : most men love to talk, because they know not how to be quiet. He is the wisest man that knows when to speak, and when to be silent ; if of every idle word men shall give an account in the day of judgment, how much more of filthy communications ? Watch over thy inward man ; tie up thy speech, and cut off its luxuriant branches ; let it not play the wanton, lest it drag thee into sin ; restrain it, and keep it within its banks ; bind up thy senses, and let them not be loose or gadding ; make a door to thy lips, shut it when there is occasion, and open it when there is necessity. Bring thy tongue under the yoke, and let it be subject to thy reason. Keep the bridle in thine own hands ; and weigh thy words in a balance, that thy sense may be ponderous, thy speech solid, and thy words move within their bounds.”

But watching against the sins of the tongue is but one half of this Exercise ; speaking of God and spiritual things is another, as we may see in *Col.* iii. 16,—an Exercise commanded already in the days of MOSES, (*Deut.* vi. 5—7,) and duly observed by men who took care of their salvation, long before the Gospel was proclaimed in the world. This makes the Prophet take notice of such : “ Then they who feared the LORD spake often one to another : and the LORD hearkened and heard it, and a Book of Remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my

jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." (*Mal.* iii. 16, 17.)

There is hardly any man, that makes a show of religion, or frequents the public ordinances of God, but will grant that the concerns of God, and of our souls, infinitely exceed all earthly objects in worth and dignity; but then, not to speak of them is an omission which contradicts that belief, and makes that faith all shadow, and imaginary.

How can we want matter of discourse, when we hear so many sermons, when we have liberty to peruse the Holy Scriptures, and read such variety of good books which are so many comments upon the Bible? There is not a precept in the Gospel. that is given to regulate our thoughts, or words, or actions, or passions, nor a command left us by our Master. but is a fit subject for such conferences. Our experience will administer matter in these cases; what experience we have had of God's goodness; what experience of the fulness of such a promise; what experience in prayer; what experience in mortification: what we have felt in such a duty; what effect our earnest striving and wrestling with the ALMIGHTY hath had; what influence such a fast, or abstinence, hath had upon us; what content we have found under such self-denials; what assistances of God's SPIRIT we have found in our fighting against temptations; what comfort in such afflictions; what hath kept us from sinking; how God hath supported us in such a calamity, and hath been our refuge, and a present help in the time of trouble, when the earth hath been moved, and when the hills have been ready to be cast into the midst of the sea.

Have we not defects and infirmities enough to discourse of? Do we find no impediments, that hinder us in our course to heaven? Do not we fall short of that Christian Perfection, which the HOLY GHOST urges? And is not our zeal for God's glory very inconsiderable? Are we not very apt to be backward to the weightier matters of the law? Do not we embrace excuses suggested by the Devil, whereby we leave the most excellent duties undone? Do

not we find imperfections and infirmities in our holy performances? Do we find no coldness, no deadness, no indisposedness in GOD's service? If we do, how can we want matter of discourse?

How many good thoughts come into our minds, when we wake first in the morning, when we lie down at night, when we are walking, when we are sitting down, when we are thrown into ill company, when we meet with good society, when we meet with singular Providences and deliverances, when we receive unexpected blessings from Heaven, or when men do us an injury? What edifying expressions and discourses may we build upon these thoughts and contemplations, when we visit one another?

How many excellent examples of holy men and women may we fix upon in our discourses? Can there be more edifying discourse, than to relate and represent to one another the holy actions of saints, either departed, or yet living; how humble ST. PAUL was, how courageous ST. PETER, how fervent DAVID, how meek MOSES, how patient JOB? One scorned to be called the son of PHARAOH's daughter, and fixed his eyes upon the great recompence of reward; another took pleasure in being reviled; another thanked GOD in the midst of torments; another prayed for those that stoned him; another chose poverty and contempt, and the loss of all things, that he might win CHRIST. These things are excellent matter of holy discourse; and such as, in all probability, ST. JAMES did aim and point at; (*Jam.* v. 10;) "Take, my brethren, the Prophets who have spoken in the name of the LORD, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience."

And if this will not do, there are so many motives, and encouraging arguments to goodness, which both we and others do make use of, that we may as soon want light at noon, as matter of pious and religious conference, when we converse with our fellow-christians. What moves us to be meek? What prevails with us to be patient? What makes us contented in all conditions? What composes our spirits in fiery trials? What puts us upon self-denial?

What incentives to the love of God do we make choice of? How came we by a serious frame of spirit? How came we to conquer such a lust? What did we do to vanquish such a corruption? How did we compass that facility and willingness to conform to God, which seem to be in us? How came CHRIST's yoke to be easy to us, and his burthen light? How came we to be rid of such a sin? How came we to extricate ourselves from such snares and deceits of the Devil? The various ways and methods, whereby we do arrive to such perfections as these, are so many doors of utterance, and will serve to make us open our mouths boldly: and he that doth so, doth, without all controversy, "exercise himself unto Godliness." And to illustrate this Exercise by some examples, it will not be impertinent to set down here the discourse of the Hermits in PASCHASIUS, who, meeting once a week, gave one another an account of their spiritual progress, and growth in grace. One of their Conferences was this:

The First said: Every day I watch against evil thoughts, and lusts, as I do against serpents and scorpions; and as soon as I find them rising in my heart, I ask them, how they dare be so bold as to profane a temple of the HOLY GHOST?

The Second said: I look upon myself every day as a stranger and pilgrim, that must suffer many inconveniences, troubles, and injuries, till I come to my journey's end; and I ever look upon the morrow, as the day wherein I shall be delivered from the burden of the flesh, and from all possibility of sinning, and so bear up, under all the crosses that befall me.

The Third said: Every day, very early in the morning, I get up, and go to my God, and throwing myself down upon my face, adore him, and intercede with him for the whole world; and this done, I go and deny my body that ease and satisfaction which flesh and blood crave, on purpose to crucify the world to myself, and myself unto the world.

The Fourth said : Every day I take a turn upon the Mount of Olives ; and there behold my dear Redeemer bleeding, and reflect on his passion, and on the agonies he endured for my sin, till the spectacle melts me into tears, and forces me into strong resolutions to imitate Him whom my soul doth love.

The Fifth said : Every day, with the eyes of my understanding, I behold the Angels of God (as JACOB once did in a dream) ascending and descending, for the salvation of men's souls ; and this love, and care, and tenderness, so work upon me, that I both wish that all mankind may be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth, and give more diligence to make my calling and election sure.

The Sixth said : Every Day I make it my business to meditate on the saying of CHRIST, " Come to me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you : take my yoke upon you ; " and I fancy I hear this voice behind me, " O Christians, if you mean to be my brethren, suffer with me, that ye may reign with me ; die with me, that ye may live with me ; conquer with me, that ye may sit with me on my throne, even as I overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

The Seventh said : Every day I sit in council with three grave Senators, Faith, Hope, and Charity ; and the effect of this consultation is, that my faith becomes more firm, my hope more lively, my charity more fervent ; and I dare not willingly offend any man, but think myself obliged to suffer long, and to be kind, not to behave myself unseemly, not to seek my own, not to be provoked, and to think no evil.

The Eighth said : Every day I do expect the Devil, and look for his assaults and stratagems ; and when I perceive him coming, I run to God, and hide myself under the shadow of his wings, and beg that his fiery darts may not hurt me.

The Ninth said : Every day with my thoughts I ascend into heaven, and there listen to the hallelujahs and har-

monious voices of the blessed Angels, and refresh my mind, and all that is within me, with those melodious songs; and when I do so, I die to the world, trample upon all sublunary objects, and despise those things which sensual men admire, as dirt and dung.

The Tenth said: Every day I do set **GOD** before me, and look upon him as present, and standing on my right hand; and I strive to have this thought continually in mind: whence it comes to pass, that I speak and do nothing, but with great consideration and deliberation.

The Eleventh said: Every day I call the graces and gifts of **GOD'S SPIRIT** about me; and when I am going out, I cry, "Where are you all? Come about me, my faithful servants;" and these are the retinue I go attended with; in this state and pomp I set forth; with this guard about me I walk, and no Devil can approach to hurt me.

And now, Brethren, if there be any consolation in **CHRIST**, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the **SPIRIT**, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy; and let not this Exercise seem grievous to you. Plead not that it is out of fashion: if it be so, do you make it modish. You know who it is that beseeches you, by the mercies of **GOD**, not to conform yourselves to the world. If it be out of fashion to be saved, will you therefore resolve to be damned? Bear up against the stream; be not ashamed of **CHRIST**, and of his Gospel. You dare not plead this excuse in the last day: why should you allege it now? Here is no rhetoric required, no eloquence, no florid learning. O that you were but more sensible of your spiritual wants! O that your hearts were but more inflamed with the love of **GOD**! O that you did but observe **GOD'S** dealings with your souls more, and would take more notice of **GOD'S** Providences, and the operations of his hands! You would not then want language to express yourselves to your children, servants, friends, neighbours, and acquaintance: but the sense within would force you to say with **DAVID**, "Come, and I will tell you what

the LORD hath done for my soul." (*Psal.* lxi. 16.) Do not think heaven so cheap a thing as your careless neighbours do; either CHRIST and heaven, and our future glory, are worth talking of, or nothing can be worth it. Dare to prefer heaven before the world; and in your words, as well as actions, manifest the sincerity of your resolution. You cannot pretend impossibility; you have a tongue, you have reason, you hear the Ministers of the Gospel, you see GOD's Providences, you know heaven and hell are before you, you read many excellent lessons; what should hinder you from speaking of these weighty things? You will rest the sweeter at night, when you have been talking of good things in the day-time: your repose will be more satisfactory, when you have exercised your tongues in matters of this nature. When you talk of such heavenly and spiritual things, you are not exposed to so many temptations, as otherwise you are, when in company with others; you may sin in talking of your neighbours; you may sin in speaking of the actions of Kings and Princes; you may sin in telling things and passages for true, which have no other foundation but an uncertain report; you may sin in foolish jesting; but in discoursing of heavenly things you are safe, you are in GOD's way, GOD walks with you. You shun the occasions of evil, and you prepare yourselves to quench the fiery darts of the Devil. Hereby you may do good to others, comfort your neighbours, and support your fellow-christians; and in such conferences a word may drop from you, which may keep those with whom you discourse from despair, and be an encouragement to them as long as they live.

It was bravely done of that young man under DECIUS's persecution, who, being by force tied upon a down-bed, in a room made for pride and luxury, and solicited to uncleanness by a harlot, sent to him by the Governor on purpose to provoke him to sin, bit his tongue to pieces, that the smart and pain might drown all sense of voluptuousness, and so spit in the harlot's face. But here we require no such severity: but all that is expected from

you in this Exercise, is to keep your tongues from evil, and your lips from speaking guile : to speak of the glorious honour of God's majesty, and of his wondrous works ; to utter abundantly the memory of his great goodness, and to declare his righteousness. The very Heathen have seen the necessity of this Exercise ; therefore they shall be your Judges in the last day : And I know not how to express their sense of this duty better, than by setting down the words of the sober EPICURETUS : " Prescribe thyself a rule," saith he, " which thou mayest observe, when thou art either by thyself, or in company with others : Either be silent, or let the things thou speakest of be necessary and profitable. When thou speakest, talk not of light and trivial things, as wrestling, or horses, or fencers, or swords, or meat, or drink, neither spend thy time in praising or dispraising men ; but let thy discourse be of something noble, decent, grave, and serious : But if this cannot be, hold thy peace." But examples of men of our own religion may be more prevailing. Thus did the primitive saints ; and when they visited one another, their care was to put one another in mind of the words and actions of their Great Redeemer, what he did, and what he promised, and what he suffered ; how kind he was to this blind man, how favourable to that leper, how loving to the lame, how gracious to his enemies, how free and communicative to his friends ; what pity he expressed to sinful men, how meek he was before his accusers, how patient before his tormentors : how he ran to kiss the penitent, how he wept over the obstinate Jews, and how he longed for men's salvation. These were their discourses, and they would hardly give themselves liberty to talk of their worldly affairs, except necessity forced them ; for they believed that, by their charter, they were to have their conversation in heaven ; and this they thought imported talking much of their heavenly country, and of the joys of that kingdom. It was the custom of some heathen priests of old, in the service of their gods, to wash or dip their tongues in honey :—an excellent emblem to teach us, how our tongues must

be purified, and sanctified, and seasoned with that word, which is sweeter than the honey-comb. (*Psal.* xix. 10.) And indeed then our words are sweet, and there is milk and honey under our tongues, when we exhort and admonish one another daily, taking heed lest we be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

THE PRAYER.

O GOD, by whom I am fearfully and wonderfully made; who hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me; such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it! How have I abused that tongue which thou hast given me to show forth thy praise! How long have I employed it about things which do not profit! O teach me to blush! O let me see how I have perverted thy gifts, and mis-improved my talents! O let me value thy mercies better; and give me thy grace to remember that I am not mine own. Assure me that I am bought with a price, to show forth the glory of Him that died for me. And can I show forth thy glory, if my tongue be not cautious of offending thee? Can it look like glorifying thee, if that member, which of all the organs of this mortal frame is most fitted for thy glory, fails in its duty? The quickness and readiness which thou hast planted in it were intended to trumpet forth thy glorious attributes. O my GOD! I will not hide thy righteousness within my heart, I will declare thy faithfulness, and thy salvation. I will not conceal thy loving-kindness and thy truth from the great congregation: Let me speak of thee with reverence and godly fear. Give me discretion to know how, and when, and what to speak. LORD, give me motives and arguments to speak as I ought to do. Let my speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that I may know how to answer every man. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of my mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace

unto the hearers. Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips. Let me delight to speak of thee, and make me afraid of every idle word. LORD, rule my tongue, and let it be wholly dedicated to thy service. In all my speeches and answers, let me study veracity, sobriety, and modesty. Open thou my lips, O LORD, and let my tongue be filled with thy praise all the day long, and in the night-season let me not be silent. Fill me with a profound sense of the great day of account, when my words will be examined as well as my actions. Season my tongue with conscientiousness, and let me not be rash with my lips. Let my heart smite me, when I am going to speak things which are not after thy law. Let thy statutes be my songs in the house of my pilgrimage, and let the law of thy mouth be better unto me than thousands of gold and silver. Amen.



THE SIXTH EXERCISE.

Every day watch against those sins, which in the eye of the world are small and inconsiderable.

THIS Exercise is commanded in *Matt. v. 19*; *1 Cor. v. 6*; and *Judc. verse 23*. Indeed, CHRIST'S whole Sermon upon the Mount is chiefly bent against those sins, which blind mortals are apt to miscall little and trivial. The Pharisees were such bad Divines, that they not only believed, but taught the people too, that in the Ten Commandments nothing was forbidden, excepting only the gross errors of men's lives and conversations. For example: in the Sixth Commandment they thought that God required nothing but abstinence from downright murder; and accordingly they made nothing of envy, or malice, or grudge, or secret heart-burnings, or of words spoken in

anger, of contumelious speeches, of giving men ill names, or ill language. These notorious mistakes CHRIST rectifies in that Sermon; and bids them look for God's eternal wrath for these offences, as well as for the greater enormities. So, in the Seventh Commandment, they flattered themselves, that they did well obey the great Lawgiver, when they kept themselves from being polluted with their neighbours' wives, and from the act of adultery; but the SON of GOD proves to them, that not only that detestable act is prohibited in that Law, but all those acts and occasions that lead to it, as wanton glances, lascivious thoughts, obscene expressions, running to places where temptations grow, bad intentions, lustful touches, evil desires; and these, he assures them, lead to hell, as well as the grosser villanies. In the same manner, they restrained the Third Commandment to perjury only in a public cause; and so thought light of customary oaths;—these were but matters of laughter; and the people, by their permission and approbation, in their common speeches swore by heaven and by earth, by their heads, and by Jerusalem. The LORD protests against this abuse also; and lets them see, that he who forbids perjury, forbids these common oaths too, and was resolved to punish the offenders for so doing; and that he did not so much as permit strong asseverations in common discourse, and ordinary matters, but allowed only bare affirmations and negations.

Thus these men extenuated their offences; and having once brought them into the number of little sins, they excluded them from their care, and would not suffer their consciences to be troubled for them. And though they had very severe exercises, and disciplined their bodies to a miracle, yet they made watching against little sins no part of their exercise. This neglect draws that dreadful protestation from the SON of GOD, (*Matt. v. 20,*) “I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of GOD.

What these little sins are, and how they may be known,

is a question that any man of common sense may soon resolve, that will either compare his actions with the precepts of the Gospel, or observe his own neglects, or the practices of such of his neighbours, as in the eye of the world pass for sober men, and yet are no thorough Christians. How few are there that make conscience of curbing their passions, of being concerned for the sins of others, of giving alms according to their ability, of speaking truth when they are in danger of losing something by the truth, of obeying God more than men, of being more careful to please the Creator than the creature, of attention during a sermon, of fixing their thoughts and affections upon God in prayer, of ruminating upon what they have heard, and of doing good to them that hate them ? Neglects of such duties pass for peccadillos ; and cunning frauds, dissimulations, officious lies, false warrantings, secret over-reachings, mincing of oaths, telling of unchaste passages, churlish behaviour, unkindness to enemies, revenge of injuries, hatred of a brother, flattery, laughing at good counsel, slighting of fraternal correction, scoffings at Ministers, rash censuring, judging, and contempt of others, pride in clothes, and carelessness in devotion, are sins which few people take notice of, looking upon them as offences of the smaller size, and as things easily pardoned.

But, Sirs, as little as these and other sins may seem in your eyes, we have a commission from the ALMIGHTY to tell you, that you cannot be Christians, except you exercise your watchfulness against all those sins which the world is pleased to call by other names than the Holy One of Israel puts upon them. A Christian hath vowed to strive against all sin, whether great or small. This oath of God is upon you, and in your baptism you promised so much. Will ye be false to your promise ? Will ye break your vow ? Will ye abjure what then you gave your consent to ? Deceive not yourselves, these sins are not little ones ; you only call them so, that you may more freely commit them ; and yet there is a secret fear in you, that they may provoke the ALMIGHTY to anger ; and, in order that

you may not be discomposed with the thoughts of God's indignation, you look upon them as trifles. But shall the wickedness of the times oblige God to condescend to men's impiety, and in complaisance to their folly, cause him to make no more of their sins than they are pleased to do? Shall men, wilfully blind, tell the ALMIGHTY what colour their sins are of, or how He must interpret them, who searches the heart and the reins?

Can any sin be little that is committed against an infinite Majesty? Can any affront be small that is levelled against Him, whose brightness dazzles the eyes of Angels? If it were not against a law of God, it could not be sin: but is not the same authority to be seen in the least precept, as well as the greatest? Doth one God give the greater, and another the lesser injunctions? And if the same God be slighted in the greater and lesser laws, will not the same God find a time to lash the boldness of the offender?

How is it possible that you can love God, while you do not exercise yourselves in rooting out these lesser sins? Can you love God and fight against him? You cannot but be sensible that these which you call lesser sins offend him; and is this your love to him, to disobey him? Is this your affection to him, to do what you know will cross his will and pleasure? Is this your respect to him, to disoblige him in things which he intends for your eternal welfare? Let the sin be ever so small in which you allow yourselves, while you willingly indulge yourselves in it, it loses the name of an infirmity, and passes for enmity in the sight of Heaven. If love to God does not make you ready to every good work, it is not love, but hypocrisy; love will make things easy: and did you love God with sincerity, you would not leave a circumstance undone, if you knew he had enjoined it.

Whatever you may imagine, these lesser sins are but baits to lead you on to greater. The Persians at this day are great takers of opium: at first they take no more than the quantity of a pin's head, increasing their dose by degrees, till they come to take the quantity of half a nutmeg;

and when they are come to that pitch, they dare not give over, for fear of endangering their lives : this is a true emblem of those sins which the world calls little and inconsiderable. The lesser does, like small wedges, widen the cleft, and are preparatives for greater, and invite men to take a larger proportion, till at last they cannot part with them ; and thus by little and little men sink into the gulf.

Nay, you cannot promise yourselves God's preventing or restraining grace, to preserve you from falling into greater sins, while you continue in the lesser ; for by these you drive away God's SPIRIT, and thrust the ALMIGHTY from you.

Bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, how little do men make of these sins ? Yet they grieve the HOLY SPIRIT of God. (*Eph. iv. 30, 31.*) And do you thus reward this SPIRIT of Love ? Hath he deserved no better at your hands ? Is this the recompence you give him for all the kind motions with which he hath followed you ?

Tell me of any one sin for which CHRIST hath not died. If the very least sin did help towards his death and crucifixion, why should not mortification of little sins be one great part of your Exercise ? Can you remember that these had a hand in that murder, and hug these enemies in your bosoms ? Can you remember that these, as well as the greater crimes of mankind, sharpened the nails, and spear, and thorns, that wounded him, and yet kiss and salute these foes ? Did CHRIST find even your unsavoury speeches, your looser gestures, your carnal thoughts, heavy,—did even these help to crush him under the burden of God's anger,—and do you make sport with them ?

He is yet a stranger to the work of grace, that hath not learned to avoid the occasions of evil : and he certainly begins at the wrong end, that begins to subdue his sin by suppressing the outward act ; for it is the evil thought that causes delight, delight consent, consent action, action habit, habit custom, custom perseverance, and perseverance hardness ; therefore he that means to crush the corruption must begin at the little sin, the evil thought, or else

he doth but beat the air, and, like the boy in the story, who thought to pour out the sea into a nut-shell, attempt impossibilities.

Christians, the day will come when every thing shall be called by its proper name; and O how will you be surprised, when the sins you looked upon as inconsiderable appear as they are indeed! “Woe to them that call evil good, and good evil,” saith God. This threatening is pronounced not only against such as give to virtue the name of vice, and to vice the name of virtue; but against such also as make of great sins little ones, and of little ones none at all.

Come, Christians, believe the word of God, before your deceitful hearts: that word will tell you what is offensive to God, and show you, that even the least sin deserves tears more than laughter: it will tell you, that even these children of Edom must be dashed against the stones, if you would have peace within; and that as “dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour, so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour.” (*Ecccl. x. 1.*) It will tell you, that “a little leaven leavens the whole lump;” and that the only way not to be under a temptation of sitting down in the scorner’s chair, is not to “walk in the counsel of the ungodly.”

Christians, there is not one soul in heaven but what watched against such little sins when they sojourned here; and if they did not mind them for some time, yet they were forced to repent of them, and to subdue and leave them, before ever they saw the face of God in glory. If this heaven be worth your care, if this glory be worth your pains, if this everlasting rest be worth your endeavours, O say not of any sin, as Lot of Zoar, “Is it not a little one, and my soul shall live?” You may as well say, I will break my neck a little, and I will cut my throat a little, and I will burn myself in hell a little, as harbour the smallest sin. O tremble at any thing that looks like it: beware of these foxes, these little foxes, that spoil the vines: trust not these vermin, but destroy them utterly: this is

the way to keep your garments white, and to fit yourselves for the wedding of the LAMB, and for those mansions into which no unclean thing must enter.

These Gibeonites, that seem inconsiderable, that come with clouts upon their feet, and look as if they would do no great harm,—these lesser sins,—are as big with mischief as the other : for their design is the same, *viz.* to engage you in a league with hell, in a covenant with death, and to lay you open to the assaults of the Devil. In a word, if you would be rid of the least sin, learn to live by rule, think by rule, and speak by rule, and work by rule, even by the rule of the word of the living GOD : “and as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and on the whole Israel of GOD.”

THE PRAYER.

O THOU who art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity ! How have I been deceived ! How have I been imposed upon by the world and my treacherous heart ! I see, LORD, what circumspection is necessary in a christian life. I repent of making so light of things which have been contrary to thy holiness. Fool that I was to imagine, that any thing can be trivial which thou hast forbidden ! Can any order proceed from thee, but what is the product of eternal deliberation ? Can any thing be needless, to which thou settest thy hand and seal ? What low thoughts must I have of thy wisdom, what mean conceptions of thy omniscience, if I harbour such imaginations ! How can any thing be little that thou dost command ? But, alas ! these are but the pretences of my lusts. Why shouldst thou prohibit any thing ? Why shouldst thou warn, entreat, and beseech me not to do it, but that thou, who knowest all things, knowest it to be prejudicial to my soul ? It is a sign that I do not esteem and prize thee. Did I truly look upon thee as the loveliest Being, and my greatest Benefactor,

I should be afraid of a disorderly thought. O let me never judge of sin any more by the fancies of carnal men, but by the holiness of thy nature: and as thou, my God, who hast called me, art holy, so let me be holy in all manner of conversation. O let me not dally with sin any more, nor make sport with it because the world calls it little, but let it be sufficient to me, that thou, my God, dislikest it; and make me entirely conformable to thy will. Give me, O thou Giver of every good thing, just apprehensions of my duty. Increase my love to thy name, and my hatred of sin will increase. O that I were more ravished with thy beauty! How odious would every thing be to me that is injurious to thy glory! O the infinite obligations I have to love thee, and yet how cold is my heart! And because it is cold, I startle at nothing but the greater sins. O let me remember that I am a Christian, and have devoted myself to thy service, and let me serve thee in keeping even the least of thy commandments. Discover to me the equity and reasonableness of every precept, that I may plead no excuses, no impediments, but break through all obstacles, to express my love. O let me esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right, and let me hate every false way. Nothing can be lovely that thou forbiddest. Nothing can be safe that thou hast warned me against! I have found the ways of sin false indeed, false as hell. When I have thought to step into a bed of pleasure, I have rushed into a gulf of misery. When I have hoped to fill myself with satisfaction, I have run into briars and thorns, and filled my heart with heaviness. O let me dread the very appearance of evil; and be thou my everlasting sweetness, my everlasting delight, my everlasting comfort, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD. Amen.

THE SEVENTH EXERCISE.

Every day we should keep a strict guard over our eyes.

THIS Exercise is recommended to us in *Job xxxi. 1*; *Ps. cxix. 37*; *Matt. v. 28, 29*; and *xviii. 9*. By the eye here, I do not mean the eye of contemplation, whereby men see what is above them; nor the eye of reason, whereby they see what is within them; but the eye of the body, which discovers to them the things that are without them: and what necessity there is for guarding the eye, the unhappy examples of persons who have been lost for want of it sufficiently show.

At these windows enter covetousness, and lasciviousness, and admiration of sensual objects, and envy. At these avenues they come in, and from these gates the poison is conveyed to the heart. Did not the covetous feed his eyes with the sight of gold, he would not forsake Paradise for Sodom, heaven for earth, and God for mammon. Did the lustful person deny himself in seeing the tempting object, he would not become a slave to his passion. Did not the envious cast his eyes on his neighbour's welfare, it would not grieve him to see his equal or inferior prosper.

This Exercise consists, First, in admiring nothing in the creature, but the Creator's glory. Secondly, in turning away our eyes from any object, which we have reason to suspect as dangerous. Thirdly, in checking the disorder which our seeing may cause in our minds. Fourthly, in making greater use of the eyes of our minds than of our bodies.

1. In admiring nothing in the creature but the Creator's glory. What beauty, what harmony, what exactness, what perfection we see in any object, that must immediately lead us to admire the supreme Cause that gave it being; his finger must be taken notice of, his wisdom magnified, his bounty adored, his power praised, and the creature only looked upon as the work of his hands, and the

product of his goodness : he that looks no farther than the creature, runs himself into snares, and God justly suffers him to fall, who would not look higher. Such a man looks no farther than a beast, and forgets that God gave him a faculty to see more than irrational animals ; such a man hath nothing to keep him in awe, and therefore is tempted to lay hold on the forbidden tree, which was only presented to his eyes by way of trial : he who, upon seeing the loveliness and beauty of a sublunary object, presently reflects on the God that made it, at the same time furnishes himself with arguments to keep within the bounds of seeing, and within the borders of virtue ; for sure he cannot at the same time admire the Creator, and sin against him.

2. In turning away our eyes from any object, which we have reason to suspect as dangerous. There is no man that observes himself, and knows what sins he is most prone to, but must needs know, or at least may know, what objects are most likely to raise disorders in the soul ; experience hath taught him, and his frequent falls have been his schoolmasters. Such objects must be shunned, as the pestilence ; and if they come within sight, his eyes must be cast down on the ground, or shut, however ridiculous this may seem to the world. There is no dallying with such objects. To see whether I am able to resist the temptation, is to sin for trial's sake, and he is certainly safer that looks another way. Our greatest wisdom is, to suspect our own frailty ; and the best way to keep sin out of the mind, is to keep it out of the eyes.

3. In checking the least disorder, which our seeing may cause in our minds and passions. It is possible we may be surprised, and the object we behold unawares may dart a covetous, or envious, or lascivious thought into our minds, and that spark may fall upon the passions ; but here the poison must be presently vomited up again, and our souls cleared of the dangerous guest ; the sudden thought must be drowned in the waters of repentance ; and greater cautiousness for the future must be used. Where this is neglected,

and men are careless of this Exercise, their souls are in danger of being consumed; for those sparks, if let alone, will soon put all into a conflagration.

4. In making greater use of the eyes of our minds, than those of our bodies. Indeed were these exercised more, those of the body would have no such evil influence upon the soul. The intellectual eye looks beyond the clouds, and sees through all the mists of this world into eternity. This beholds the satisfactions of another world, and the treasure which God hath laid up for them that fear him. This looks up to the everlasting hills: and as the eyes of servants look unto the hands of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden look unto the hands of her mistress, so this waits upon the King of Heaven, till he is pleased to answer in the still voice of love and mercy. In these particulars this Exercise consists: and this is what we press upon you; this is what we exhort you to, and entreat you to employ yourselves in, as you would not bear the name of Christians in vain.

This hath been the care of saints in all ages. This Exercise the ancient Fathers pressed: and upon such sermons the wanton world began to be reformed. This made the virgins cover their faces with veils, that they might neither tempt others, nor be tempted with the spectators. This made the world take notice of the holy looks of Christians, and observe how, with their lives and conversations, the motions of their eyes and their gestures changed. The quickness of their eyes was lost with their sins: and the wantonness of their looks expired with their debaucheries. They considered, that their reason was given them to subdue their senses; and they justly thought, that in vain they pretended to a life of reason and religion, unless they subdued their senses, and fenced all those passages where sin and folly used to enter. This gave religion credit, and made men come from the east and west to gaze upon it. This made the world wonder to see human nature rise so high, and attain to a pitch of sanctity, to which even the heathen gods had been strangers.

THE PRAYER.

O THOU, whose eyes are like flames of fire, and whose feet are like brass glowing in a furnace; who art brighter than the sun, and clearer than the stars; whose eyes run to and fro through the world, to show thyself strong in the behalf of those whose heart is upright before thee:—I have deserved that no eye should pity me, because I have not used my sight with that moderation, modesty, and piety, which thou justly requirest of me. I have had eyes, and have not seen those things of which I should have taken notice: it were just in thee to strike me blind, and to deprive me of that mercy which I have so often turned into wantonness! I have gazed upon objects that have inflamed my lusts, irritated my passions, and kindled hell-fire in my breast. Ah! what impure, what disorderly thoughts have I let in through these windows! O look upon me, and have mercy on me. Open thou mine eyes, that I may see wondrous things out of thy law. O let nothing be so pleasant to mine eyes as thy marvellous works. Teach me to see thee in thy Providence, and in thy works of grace and nature. O let me remember that, wherever I am, I am before the eye of thy glory; and let mine eyes be ever toward the LORD. If my right eye offend me, let me pull it out. Give me courage to turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity, when that vanity would make me enamoured with the world. Quicken the eyes of my mind, that I may behold thy power and glory, as I have seen it in the sanctuary. Show me the danger of walking in the sight of mine eyes, and guide me by thine eye. Destroy in me all lofty looks; and the lust of the eye do thou remove far from me. Let my outward as well as inward man be thy servant. O let me see, and taste, how sweet and how gracious thou art. Thou hast given me my eye-sight; cause me to see thy salvation; and let me see that I walk circumspectly, as wise men, and not as fools, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Con-

sider, and hear me, O LORD my God; lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death. Keep me as the apple of thine eye: hide me under the shadow of thy wings: then shall I behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness. O glorious sight, when I shall see thee as thou art! How ravishing will that prospect be! How transporting that vision! O let me not miss of it! I will look upon thee here. I will behold thee in the blessings I enjoy. I will see thee in thy mercies, and admire thee. I will look to myself, that I may not err from thy commandments. I will look for the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwells righteousness. I will look up unto Mount Zion, which fades not away. I will look unto the LORD, that I may be enlightened, and that my face may not be ashamed, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD. Amen.

THE EIGHTH EXERCISE.

Every day there is occasion to make good use of the virtues and vices of our neighbours, or of those who have lived before us, and of whose actions we have either read or heard.

THIS Exercise is commanded in *Luke* xiii. 2, 3; *1 Cor.* x. 6—11; *Rom.* xv. 4. The Chaldee Paraphrast upon the thirty-fourth chapter of *Deuteronomy*, tells us, “God taught us to clothe the naked, when he made ADAM and EVE coats of skin, and clothed them: and he taught us to marry in the LORD, and in the fear of GOD, when he joined them two together: and he taught us to comfort those that mourn, when he manifested himself to JACOB, coming back from Paran, in the place where his mother died: and he taught us to feed the poor, when he sent bread to the

children of Israel from heaven : and he taught us to bury the dead, when himself was pleased to bury MOSES the man of GOD." So far the interpreter, though a Jew, is in the right. But this is not all: not only GOD's actions, but the actions of our neighbours, must be improved to our spiritual advantage. And this Exercise consists partly in imitating the good actions, partly in shunning the bad, or such as we have reason to suspect as evil.

1. In imitating the good. "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise,"—wherever you see it, in whomsoever you meet with it, whether in a Jew, or Heathen, or Christian,—“think on these things,” and imitate them, saith the Apostle. Such a Christian is eminent for his meekness; another for patience; a third for peaceableness; a fourth for modesty; a fifth for charity; a sixth for humility; a seventh for spiritual joy; another for self-denial; another for temperance; another for pardoning of injuries. To look upon these patterns is not enough; but then we exercise ourselves to godliness, when we bring ourselves to imitation, in some such way as this:—How lovely is this virtue! How amiable this temper! What content must it cause in this man to be so favoured of GOD! What should hinder me from following him? Why should not this practice kindle in me desires to arrive at the same happiness? Could he be master of this grace, and why cannot I? Is not the same GOD alive, and the same SPIRIT ready to assist me? Have not I the same means of grace to help me? Suppose my condition is not the same with his; yet is there any condition in which a man may not be good, or is not obliged to be so?

If I go among the Turks, I shall see the highest, as well as the lowest, the Emperor, as well as the meanest subject, rise by break of day to praise GOD. If I go among the Jews, I shall find that they will begin no work, do no business,

nothing about their houses, till they have been at their prayers. If I go among the Heathen, I shall find, that though their goods and houses, and all they have, and their lives too, were in danger, they would not break off in the midst of the service of their gods, but stay till they have done. Can I imagine, that these examples are represented to me without a Providence? Can I imagine that these are no invitations to convert those good customs into practice? Shall a Heathen, a Turk, a Jew, out-do me in holiness? If they do, shall not “the Queen of the South rise in the day of judgment, and condemn” me, who “came from the farthest parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of SOLOMON; but a greater than SOLOMON is here?”

In the same manner, if I read the Bible, and meet with excellent endowments of men, I am idle and lazy, and, like that slothful servant in the Gospel, hide my talent in a napkin,—if,—reading of the zeal of MOSES, of the contentedness of JOB, of the even spirit of DAVID, of the steadfastness of DANIEL, of the constancy of SHADRACH, MESHACK, and ABED-NEGO. of the faithfulness of SAMUEL, of the circumspection of ENOCH, of the early piety of JOSIAH, of the candour of ST. PAUL, of the sincerity of NATHANAEL, of the strong faith of ABRAHAM, of the alms and prayers of CORNELIUS, of the fervency of ST. PETER, of the readiness of the Bereans to receive the word, of the Philippian Gaoler’s earnestness to be saved,—I do not force myself to follow these examples. Indeed this is the end of GOD’s setting these examples before me; and except I make these instances my patterns, I read the Scripture unprofitably.

It is true, when the good actions I meet with in Scripture are peculiar to the place, calling, or office, of the saint that wrought them,—as the Prophet saying to the man that met him, “Smite me, I pray thee,” and the Apostles taking neither gold nor silver in their pockets, when they went to preach the Gospel,—where the good actions are of this nature, I am not bound to exercise myself so, as to study imitation. But as to all those actions which

they did in conformity to the moral law of **GOD**, and the rules which the Gospel prescribes to all Christians, there I am bound to look upon these examples as voices from heaven to summon me to make that use of them. Could they, who had greater impediments than you have, embrace **CHRIST**'s yoke, and cannot you? Could they, who had more to plead for their refusal of **GOD**'s offers than you, leave all, and follow **CHRIST**, and cannot you? Could they leave lands, and houses, and father, and mother, and life itself, for the Gospel, and cannot you part with a trifle for Heaven's glory? Did they think nothing too costly to part with for the pearl of price, and will not you quit one bosom-sin for it?

Nor is this only to be observed in Scripture-passages, but in Civil Histories too. I may chance to read of the admirable acts of pagans;—for instance, of the continence of **SCIPIO**, who, being but twenty-four years of age, young, lively, and what is more, a conqueror, and having taken prisoner a young lady of noble blood and wonderful beauty, did not only dismiss her to her friends uninjured, but added the vast sum of money brought for her ransom, as an augmentation of her portion. I may light upon such an example as that of **CURIUS**, who, being presented with a great quantity of gold by the Samnites, though poor, refused it, saying, that he had rather rule over a wealthy people, than be wealthy himself. I may read of the moderation of **METELLUS**, of the constancy of **PHOCION**, of the sobriety of **SOCRATES**, of the meekness of **ARCHYTAS**, of the chastity of **SPURINA**, of the gratitude of **MASSANISA**, of the gravity of **ARISTIDES**, and of the temperance of **EPICURUS**. Even here, I must not be a careless reader of these things; but make this inference from them:—If these men arrived at such a degree of virtue by the light of nature, what a shame will it be to me, if, assisted by the light both of grace and nature, I fall short of it.

2. The same method must be observed in respect to the sins and vices of others, whose example must affright us from those sins, and stir up our hatred against them.

Let the sins of others attract sensual men into delight and compliance ;—a Christian must live above that sordid condescension. The follies of his neighbour must make the fire of his zeal against those offences scorch the more ; as their virtues must make him grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our **LORD JESUS CHRIST**.

This is your work, my friends ; this is the task which the **GOD** of your fathers hath set you ; in this race you are to run : the good works of those with whom you converse, or which you hear mentioned by others, you are to transcribe upon your own lives. As light doth naturally issue out from fire, and flowers send forth a delightful fragrancy ; so, saith **ST. BASIL**, from the light or commemoration of holy men's actions proceeds very great advantage. This is to draw pictures from divine images. Thus did the men of whom **POTITIANUS** spake to **ST. AUSTIN**. As they were walking forth to take the air, they lighted upon a cottage, where some religious persons lived ; and, taking a view of their devotion, and manner of conversation, and meeting with a history of a certain holy man's life in one of the rooms, they read it, and from these considerations were so transported, that immediately they resolved to become friends of **GOD** and holiness. And so **ST. BASIL** professes of himself : “ When I saw,” saith he, “ about Alexandria, and in other parts of Egypt, in Palestina, Celosyria, and Mesopotamia, divers men that had consecrated themselves to the service of **GOD**, I could not but stand amazed at the strictness of their diet, their patience in holy labours, and their vigour and constancy in prayer. When I observed how, neither conquered with sleep, nor overcome with the infirmities of their natures, they kept up and maintained a lively sense of **GOD**, mocking both hunger and thirst, both cold and nakedness, as if they lived in another world, and their souls dwelt in a spiritual body,—and how nothing would satisfy them, but bearing in their bodies the marks of the **LORD JESUS**,—I began to envy their happiness, and thought it long till I attained to their felicity.”

This is the learning that must fit you for the university of the third heaven. All the wisdom of SOLOMON, without this skill, would have done him but little good. Behold the fountain of your comforts! Would you be supported in distress? Would you be preserved from fainting under troubles? Would you bear up under the greatest storms? Would you hold out in the greatest persecutions? Survey the actions of the martyrs and confessors of old, and they will shed new life into your spirits, strengthen you beyond expectation, defend you against discouragements, and make you weather all the tempests that come against you. Are you reproached? Look upon DAVID, how patiently he endured the revilings of SHIMEI. Are you persecuted for righteousness' sake? Look upon the Apostles of our LORD, how they rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer for the name of the LORD JESUS. Do you suffer wrongfully? Look unto JESUS, the Author and Captain of your salvation, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, and despised the shame. Are you bound with chains? Look upon ST. PAUL, how he gloried in those shackles, and was confident that they would promote GOD's glory. Do friends forsake you? Look upon LAZARUS, of whom GOD took care, when none would regard or relieve him.

Nay, in death itself, the sweet and heavenly frame of spirit, that is to be found in the saints of GOD, will be of great efficacy to arm yourselves against the assaults of that last enemy. When death approaches, look upon the courage, the joy, the resolution, and the cheerfulness of POLYCARP, of IGNATIUS, and others. "Come forth, my soul," said old HILARION; "Why art thou afraid? Venture into another world. Why dost thou doubt? Hast thou served CHRIST so long, and dost thou tremble?"—ST. JEROME, when he was departing, thus addressed himself to his friends that stood about him: "Throw off your mourning-weeds, and sing a psalm of praise to GOD; for hitherto I have gone through fire and water, but now I am entering into my cooling-place. O what a gainful

thing is death to me ; for CHRIST with all his merits will be mine. Behold, my friends, the earthly tabernacle is going to be dissolved, that I may enter into another made without hands, eternal in the heavens : I am going to put off corruption, that I may put on incorruption. Hitherto I have been a traveller ; but now I am going to my own country. I see the prize before me, for which I have been running so long : I am come to my desired haven : I am passing from darkness to light, from fighting to victory, from a temporal to an everlasting life. The life of this world is no life, but death. The merchandise of death is more precious than that of gold and rubies. O comfortable death ! Certainly thou art no King of Terrors ; for thou givest true life. Come then, my beloved, my spouse, my friend, show me where He feeds, whom my soul doth love. Awake, my glory. Lend me thy hand, draw me after thee. My heart is ready ; rise and follow the perfume I smell, till thou bring me into my Father's house. Thou art lovely, my friend ; come, and do not tarry. By thee I must go into the garden of my Beloved, that I may eat of his fruit. The time is come for thee to have mercy on me ; make haste, and fly to me : for I am sick of love. Thou art terrible to the Kings of the earth, and crushest the spirits of Princes ; but to the humble thou makest thy power to be known. Thou breakest the horns of the wicked, and liftest up the horns of the righteous. Open to me, thou gate of life. Take away my coat, this mortal coat which I wear ; and deck me with the garment of praise. Break the bow and shield, the sword and the battle. Harden not thy heart against me. Take pity of a hungry son, that hath lived long in a strange country, and deliver him back to his own Father again."—Thus departed that holy man ; thus he spoke, and thus he died. —What excellent cordials are such patterns to a dying Christian ! He that takes a view of them, learns what to say, and how to speak to God, and to his own soul, when he is going to leave this world. A Christian indeed

looks upon those that are better than himself; by these he takes example; and to come up to their perfection, is a great part of his Exercise.

GOD hath not given all perfections to one man, lest he should be exalted above measure. But this man hath what thou hast not, and thou hast that which is denied to him; that he, considering the good which he hath not, and which is to be seen in thee, may prefer thee before himself; and again, that thou, who seest that in him, which thou hast not, mayest give him the greater honour.

Counterfeit Christians consider not wherein other men excel them, but wherein they excel others. They take no notice what gifts their neighbours have received above their own, but what evil others do commit, wherein they fall short of them; and thus their spiritual pride leads them on to carnal security, and that carnal security entitles them to the portion which is reserved for hypocrites. I have not the virtue another hath, that I may labour to be master of it; and another possibly wants the grace I have, that he may be restless till he hath attained it;—so true is that saying of the Apostle, “The eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.” (1 Cor. xii. 21.)

THE PRAYER.

MOST merciful Father, Creator of heaven and earth, who hast given me a soul apt to be led by examples, and hast set excellent patterns before me, that I may follow their steps; incline my heart, I beseech thee, to consider the large provision thou hast made for my better part, and let me not continue blind in the midst of so many shining and burning lights. O let me see with other eyes than those of carnal men. O raise my mind, and carry it up to the holy Mount, to the Mount of God; and from thence let

me behold the portion of thy children, of those excellent souls that despise the world, and labour for honour and immortality. Discover to me the comforts they enjoy in thy bosom, and how thou makest them to drink of the rivers of thy pleasures. Let their faith encourage me to believe in hope, against hope; that, as they are made perfect in love, so I may be perfect too, and may be one with thee, even as thou and they are one. I cannot have a better example than Thyself; O make me partake of thy Divine Nature. Give me a holy ambition to be like thee. Make me merciful, as my Father in Heaven is merciful. O let that mind be in me, which was also in CHRIST JESUS. O JESUS, attract my soul with thy beauty. Teach me to tread in thy steps. Let thy example be ever before me; and wherever I am, let me do nothing unworthy of it. If I follow thee, I cannot err: Thou art the way, the truth, and the life. LORD, do thou appear amiable to my soul, that this sight may constrain me to learn of thee. Transcribe thy graces on my soul, and life; that my conversation may show that I am thy disciple indeed, resolved to live and die, and rise with thee to eternal glory. Give me the spirit of ST. PAUL. Give me the excellent temper of those saints, who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of the fire, out of weakness were made strong, and were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. O deny me not the same spirit of faith, that at last I may obtain the end of my faith, the salvation of my soul, through CHRIST our LORD. Amen.

THE NINTH EXERCISE.

Put a charitable interpretation upon what you see or hear, especially when it doth look ill.

THIS Exercise is commanded in 1 Cor. xiii. 4—7; Rom. xiv. 13; and Matt. vii. 1—3. It is an Exercise very necessary in this age, where men's misconstructions of one another's actions have made them strangers to that charity which thinks no evil; wherein men will be judges of other men's hearts, and think that God hath given them free leave to pass their censure on all who come within their knowledge.

This Exercise includes five duties, *viz.* 1. Unwillingness to believe any thing ill of others. 2. Believing and hoping that it was not done with any ill intention. 3. Ascribing the evil act either to education, or ignorance, or the society they have been in, or necessity, or some other circumstances, which may take off from the greatness of the guilt. 4. Pitying them. 5. Believing readily all the good we hear of our neighbours.

1. Unwillingness to believe any thing ill of our fellow-christians. A quick belief of things of this nature, argues either malice, or great vanity of mind. The best man that lives cannot escape the lashes of a slanderous tongue; and there are thousands, that will raise ill reports of their neighbours, without any other ground but a humour. We see daily how we are deceived, by giving credit to rumours; and shall I believe any thing ill of my neighbour, because two or three men say so? Nay, though a man of credit and honour accuses him, my belief at the best must be but slow and wavering. If wavering and doubting be allowable in any sort of faith, it is in this; and "Surely it cannot be so bad," must be our language in these cases; "there may be a mistake in it: let the thing be better examined first, before we give the verdict: Let us not be peremptory in our judgment, till we have

heard him plead in his own defence; till then, let us suspend our thoughts, and think better of his actions." Thus we ought to qualify the ill we hear of our neighbours: and he that thus exercises his discretion, and his reason, acts like a rational man, upon principles of prudence and christian circumspection.

2. Believing, and hoping, that the ill which our neighbour is found to have done, was not done with an ill intention. This is another branch of that charitable interpretation of our neighbour's actions. Without all peradventure, the intention either aggravates or qualifies a crime. He that hurts his neighbour with an intent to be revenged upon him, certainly is a greater sinner than he that hurts him only to save himself. He that tells a passage of me, which renders me ridiculous, may not do it with an intention to traduce me, but out of inconsiderateness.—Some actions indeed are so foul, that the offender cannot, with any colour of reason, be supposed to have had a good intention in them: but where there is one that is so, there are ten others which are capable of a double intention. And since we cannot look into men's hearts, nor search into the recesses of their minds, it is our safest course to exercise our charity as to their intent; and this is the import of CHRIST'S command, (*John* vii. 24,) "Judge not according to appearance."—Where the action is capable of a good intention, let us ever give our vote for that. For suppose we err, it is an error on the right side: and it is more christian-like to believe a bad man to be good, than to bring ourselves to a habit of censuring, and consequently to run ourselves into danger of misinterpreting the harmless acts even of the best of men.

3. Ascribing the evil act either to education, or to ignorance, or to the society our neighbour converses with, or to necessity, or to some other circumstances, which may take off from the greatness of the guilt.—I have read of a Persian King, who had condemned a prisoner to death, and given the executioner a sign to do his office. The Prisoner, despairing of all hopes of mercy, in his own

language began to revile the King, and curse him. The King demanded, what it was which the wretch did mutter. A grave and charitable man that stood by answered, " This unhappy creature was saying, that Paradise awaits those that show mercy ; and none can so much reckon upon the happiness of another world, as those that moderate their anger." The King, hearing this, immediately revoked the sentence, and bid him live. Another courtier, who bore a spleen to this sober man, presently stepped forth, and assured the King, that the Prisoner had been so far from answering modestly, that he had most basely reviled him, and that this man had misrepresented the malefactor's answer. The King hereupon fell into a passion, and protested, " I like this man's lie better than thy truth ; for he hath covered the malefactor's ill-nature with the mantle of charity, but thou speakest nothing but spleen and malice !" Though I do not like this way of doing good turns, yet, in the main, the action was generous ; and would men, as the Philosopher advised them, put the bag, wherein their own faults are, before, and that wherein their neighbour's offences are, behind, there is no question but they would observe the rules I have laid down. I am sure, he that means to work in God's vineyard, like a Christian, must do so. Breeding, education, and society, and other circumstances, make great alterations upon men's tempers and inclinations ; and if these causes be rightly considered, the injuries we receive, or fancy, will not appear so big as flesh and blood represent them.

It takes off from the heinousness of the evil act, if we think it is not inclination, but some adventitious heat, that hath caused the injury. Such a man reproaches me ; it is possible he may not know me ; if he did, he would not give himself that freedom. Another takes me to be a drunkard ; it is possible, those that hate me told him so ; perhaps it was misinformation that made this man despise me ; perhaps it was his being in such a family that made him neglect my counsel. Whatever is possible in these cases may justly be believed ; and this is what the

Apostle means by saying, that “Charity believeth all things.”

4. Pitying our fellow-christians on account of their faults and errors. Thus ST. PAUL pitied the Jews his countrymen, who had studied to murder him. (*Rom. ix. 3.*) We pity men that are sick, and such as have not the use of their reason, or as have lost their estate and fortune, or are fallen into the hands of a powerful enemy. And shall not we pity the man, who, by his error and offence, is fallen sick of a desperate disease, which, if not speedily remedied, will make him languish and die into eternal torments? Shall not we pity the wretch who hath unmanned himself, and lost his reason in his sinful enterprise? Shall not we pity a creature, that by his sin hath lost the favour of GOD, and his title to the treasures which CHRIST hath purchased by his death and passion? Shall not we pity him who hath lost his way, and is fallen among the thieves of hell, is become a subject of the Prince of Darkness, and hath wrought himself into a worse condition than that of the Israelites under the tyranny of PHARAOH? Certainly, such a man deserves our pity more than our anger, and our tears more than our stripes. The injury which he hath done to us is not so great as that he hath done to himself; and he is to be pitied the more, because he doth not pity himself. We are not only to weep with them that weep, but to weep over those too, that have cause to mourn for themselves, and are blinded, and do not; for that is the greater misery. He that is sensible of his misery may find a way to be freed from it; but he that is not, runs on, and locks up all the gates of mercy and recovery against himself; whence must necessarily arise those everlasting plagues which were prepared for the Devil and his Angels.

5. A ready belief of all the good that is said of our neighbours. Indeed this is a sign of a generous mind, that it would have no man bad, but is desirous that all mankind should meet in this centre. A sanctified soul doth attentively listen to such reports, and rejoices at the

blessings which God hath conferred upon his neighbour ; and if the good things said of him be not true, it however wishes that they were so. Such a man hopes that the very shadows of his neighbour's graces are substantial things ; and though he would not, if he could help it, suffer sin upon him, yet till he hath certain knowledge to the contrary, he believes he is the man that he seems, and is reported to be. A Christian hath a soul greedy after goodness ; and is glad of an opportunity to think well of his neighbour. That which makes him loth to believe any ill of him, makes him believe all that is said in his commendation ; for he abhors that which is evil ; sin is odious to him, because God hates it, and therefore he would have no man guilty of it ; and because goodness is exceedingly lovely in his eyes, and God loves it, therefore he would have all men love goodness, that God may love them,—and *that* draws this charitable belief from him. He believes what he would have to be true, and so makes good the character which ST. PAUL gives of Charity, that “ it thinketh no evil, but rejoiceth in the truth.”

And this is the Exercise which is incumbent upon you, men, fathers, and brethren ; an Exercise of such necessity, that you must declare war against that law of nature, “ Whatsoever you would that men should do unto you, even so do ye to them,” if you neglect or undervalue it. Is there any of you that would not be thus dealt with ? Would not you have others put such charitable interpretations on your words and actions ? And would you have others subject to this rule, and except yourselves ? Would you have others live up to this light, and would you love darkness better ? Would you have others discharge their duty to you, and would you be excused from discharging yours to them ? What can be more unreasonable ? Where is your justice, your equity, your religion ?

You are for peace and quietness ; but are your sinister constructions of your neighbour's actions the way to it ? Charitable interpretations will preserve you from a storm ; but where you abate nothing of the fault, your passions

must needs rise into a tempest. Calmness of mind is so great a blessing, that a wise man would purchase it at any price ; and when you may have it at so cheap a rate, as the favourable interpretations of what your neighbours say, or do, will ye stand out and refuse the treasure ?

This Exercise will preserve you from a thousand sins, and as many inconveniences. We see how men, when once they give way to uncharitable censures, run from one sin to another, and know not where to stop ? This uncharitableness leads them on to envy, envy to wrath, wrath to backbiting, and backbiting to revenge ; revenge stops their progress in goodness ; and who can reckon up all the evils that flow from this polluted spring ? Shall God allow grains in offences, and shall not we ? Shall he remember that we are dust, and shall we forget that our neighbours are so ? How can we expect that God will deal favourably with us, if we do not deal so with our fellow-christians ? Why do we call ourselves Christians, if we will not learn to run in this race ? This charitable interpretation of what we see, or hear, is one character which is to distinguish us from Jews, Heathens, and Infidels : if we want this mark, how shall CHRIST distinguish us from the goats ?

Who hath made you judges of your neighbours ? Who opened a window to you into their hearts ? Why do you usurp God's authority ? Hath he appointed a day in which he will judge the world, and will you prevent that judgment ? Are you ever likely to love your neighbour as yourselves, while you reject this Exercise ? And if you are resolved not to learn it, how will you be able to appear at the great tribunal ? Have you forgotten, that Love is the root of all virtues ? Have not you heard, that this makes the soul beautiful and lovely in the eyes of Him that gave it ? Have you forgotten, that this is the bond that unites the soul to its Creator ? This is the gold of the sanctuary, without which we are naked, poor, and miserable. This makes a man like a living man ; without this, religious societies are no better than hells, and the

inhabitants of convents no better than Devils. Put on sackcloth, tear your flesh, fast yourselves to death, lie on the hard ground, walk in black, pray whole days together, —without this Love, you have not yet arrived at any true holiness.

THE PRAYER.

O GOD, who art infinitely compassionate,—Love itself, —and goodness itself: Ah! how selfish is my heart! To whom shall I complain, but to thee, who alone canst heal me! Thou hast balm, Thou hast plasters for all sores, medicines for all diseases. How apt am I to think and speak ill of my neighbour! How doth my blood boil, when either a real or an imaginary injury is offered to me! O thou GOD of Peace, thou Father of Mercy, melt, melt this stubborn heart. How loth is it to yield to thy injunctions! I am encompassed with all the rays of GOD's love imaginable. Thou bearest with me, when I deserve punishment; thou dealest not with me after my sins, neither rewardest me after mine iniquities. Even my best actions thou mightest justly except against; but thy love covers a multitude of faults. How often do I provoke thee, and yet thou shootest not thine arrows at me. I transgress thy laws; I affront thee; I am an unprofitable servant; yet thou pitiest me, and dost not suffer thy displeasure to arise. In the midst of my follies thou art kind; not because thou approvest of them, but because thou wouldest lead me to repentance. O let me think of this; and let me love my neighbour with a pure heart fervently. Spread thy wings over me. Form in me bowels of mercy. Banish from me all sourness of spirit. Let all bitterness and wrath die in me. Let all malice flee away from my soul; rid me of that ill-nature which lodges in me. Let gentleness and meekness be welcome guests in my heart. Make me peaceable and tractable, easy to be entreated, full of good works, and ready to forgive. Let the love of the LORD JESUS be my guide; and let me truly follow the LAMB whithersoever he goes. O JESUS,

can I, after thy love to my soul, be unkind to others ! Can I be churlish, morose, and ill-natured, when I remember how thou diedst for thy enemies ! I believe thou intercedest for me in heaven. What favourable constructions must I suppose are put upon my actions in that intercession ! When SATAN accuses me in the presence of GOD, and hath but too much reason for those accusations, thou pleadest thy merits, thy wounds, and thy Father's love. Where my infirmities will bear excuse, thou qualifiest them, and sufferest not the enemy to have his will of me. O let thy great example be ever before me ! And when I would forget it, represent it in lively colours to my mind ; that I may be thy disciple indeed, and, having lived in love here, may at last arrive at the Paradise of everlasting love. Amen.

THE TENTH EXERCISE.

Conscientiously and faithfully discharge the duties of your several relations, callings, and conditions.

THIS Exercise is enjoined in *Ephes.* vi. 1—5, 9 ; *Col.* iii. 18—22 ; iv. 1 ; 1 *Pet.* ii. 17, 18 ; *Tit.* ii. 2—4, 6, 9 ; *Heb.* xiii. 17 ; 1 *Tim* iii. 2, 3, 9, 12 ; and *Rom.* xiii. 1—7. Let a Christian's work be ever so hard, if he make not this conscientious discharge part of his work, he works as those that built the Tower of Babel ; rolls SISIPHUS's stone ; and, like subterraneous spirits that are to be seen in mines, with great labour and industry does nothing. I mean by "several relations, callings, and conditions," those of father and mother, parents and children, masters and servants, husbands and wives, tutors and scholars, magistrates and subjects, ministers and people, rich and poor, old men and young men, bond and free, noble and ignoble, tradesmen and gentlemen. If the Exercise commanded in the text

be universal, then certainly all these have their task ; all these are bound to exercise themselves in the duties belonging to the relation or condition in which they stand. And,

1. How do I exercise myself unto godliness, as a Father or Mother of children, except I show them a good example ; except I behave myself decently, gravely, soberly, and modestly before them, that they may learn nothing ill by my carriage ; except I bring them up in the fear of God ; talk to them of the odiousness of sin, and the beauty of holiness ; instruct them in the ways of God ; and pray with them, and for them ; except I provide for them, not only for their bodies, but their souls too ; except I admonish them in the LORD, reprove them for their faults, and correct them early for an indecent action or expression ; except I oblige them to use reverence to their father and mother ; except I instil conscientious principles into them, the principles of justice, honesty, goodness, meekness, patience, and giving every one their due ; except I inquire into their devotion, whether, and how, they read, and pray, and hear ; except I watch their actions, their eating, drinking, sleeping, working, writing, studying, and see whether they keep within bounds, or not ; except I examine them, what progress they make in piety, whether they make conscience of secret duties, whether they are respectful and obedient to the Ministers of the word of God, whether they be attentive in hearing sermons, whether they delight in keeping the LORD'S Day holy, and what apprehensions they have of their spiritual and eternal condition, how they spend their time, and whether they apply themselves to those virtues of which they read and hear, whether they do not indulge themselves in pride, or lying, or envy, or hatred, or revengeful desires, whether they are tractable, or live up to the rules and precepts which I give them ?

2. Then I exercise myself unto godliness, as a Child, as a Son or Daughter, when I follow the good instructions of my Parents ; when I obey them in every lawful thing ; when I have an honest desire to please them, and a filial

fear of their displeasure ; when I do not lose my respect to them, though I am got out of their jurisdiction, nor deride them for their infirmities, but, like the sons of NOAH, cover their nakedness with the cloak of charity ; when I speak of them, and to them, with reverence ; when I take their admonition and correction kindly ; when I seek to promote their credit and reputation ; when I am guided by their discretion and good example ; when I neither marry, nor settle myself in the world, without their advice, and am governed by their direction more than by mine own determination ; when I express my grateful sense of their kindness, and study how I may requite their paternal care and love ; when I interpret all they do or say candidly ; when I respect them, though they are poor, and bear the same love to them if they be sunk into a low condition, that I would have done if they had been advanced to the highest prosperity ; when in their lawful commands I show passive obedience, and, where I cannot obey them for conscience-sake, suffer their anger, and the effects of it, patiently, without traducing, or exposing them to the scorn and laughter of men ; when, like the RECHABITES, I obey them in things lawful, yet difficult, and suffer not the uneasiness or hardness of the task to discourage me from acting according to their prescriptions.

3. How can that man be said to exercise himself unto godliness, as a Master of a family, who is himself a slave to sin : who either drinks, or swears, or cheats, or lies ; and who, instead of discouraging his servants from any of these sins, doth rather entice them to these transgressions ? Who is regardless of his great Master in heaven, to whom ere long he must give an account of his stewardship ? Who cares not what qualifications his servants have, so that they will but do his work ; and is not at all displeased, if they privily slander their neighbours, or turn aside from the holy commandment delivered unto them ? Who either oppresses his servant with work and drudgery, or gives him leave to waste much time in doing nothing ? Who allows his servants no time to perform their duty to their

Maker, nor encourages them to prayers by his example and command? Who gives them liberty to do what they please on the LORD'S Day, and is unconcerned if they neglect the public worship of GOD, or their private devotion? Who takes no notice of their thrivings in grace; and cares not what he does in their presence, so that his passion and humour be gratified? Who gives them unkind language; and, instead of reproofing them with meekness for their faults, reviles them with bitterness? Who doth not give them things convenient for their sustenance, and denies them the wages for which they serve him? Who doth not faithfully instruct his covenant-servant in the art or trade he hath promised to instruct him in, and hath no tenderness, no compassion, to such persons in their distress and sickness? Or who thinks much of giving them bread, when they cannot work, and of maintaining them when Providence hath disabled them from doing their master's business?

4. If I will exercise myself unto godliness, as a Servant, I must be diligent, faithful, industrious, and careful in the work I am employed in; I must advance my master's interest, and manage his concerns, in his absence, with the same honesty that I would do if he were present; I must cheerfully run at his command, if not contrary to the will of GOD, and be ready to do the errand he sends me upon. I must not pick and choose my work, but do that which he thinks fit. I must not grumble at his order, nor be unwilling to go where he sends me. I must love him, as well as serve him; and honour the froward, as well as the gentle. I must not suffer any of his goods to be embezzled, nor waste the treasure he hath committed to my charge. I must not mis-spend the hours he gives me for my work; nor dissemble with him in things that make for his advantage. I must be tender of his honour; and the secrets of the house I must not reveal to strangers. I must not discover his faults, without a lawful call. I must not let persons come into his house that would either wrong him, or do him mischief. I must stand up in his vindication,

when he is abused; and take heed of exaggerating his errors, if they come to be public. I must not tell him a lie, if I have committed a fault, nor stand to justify or excuse my error. I must not answer again when I am chid by him; and much less repay him with ill language, if his passion prompts him to speak more than otherwise he would have done. I must bear with his infirmities; and though he hath his failings, yet do him service with fear and trembling. I must not despise him, because I am better born, nor speak dishonourably of him, because I understand more than he. I must plead conscience, when he would have me do a thing that is displeasing to God; and humbly beg of him not to put me upon that which will be a torment to my spirit. I must endeavour to gain his love; and do sometimes more than he commands me, to testify my zeal to do my duty. I must listen to the good lessons he gives me from the word of God, and exhort my fellow-servants to do the like. I must be kind to his children, and take care that I do not draw them into any thing that may be prejudicial, either to their souls or bodies.

5. That man doth not exercise himself unto godliness, as a Husband, who loves not his wife without dissimulation; or who doth not, as much as in him lies, promote her spiritual and everlasting welfare: Who doth not care for dwelling with her; nor thinks it his duty to entreat the light of God's countenance for her, or join in prayer with her: Who is intemperate in his wedlock; or thinks, that the strict alliance between him and her warrants any thing immodest, extravagant, and inordinate, and that no decorum is to be observed in that estate: Who hath no care of her health, wealth, and credit, or loves her more for her money and beauty than her virtue: Who gives her reproachful language, and reproves her not with tenderness and compassion, if her errors deserve reprehension: Who doth not instruct her, so far as he is able, or doth not help her to bear the burden of the family: Who cares not what becomes of her, so himself can but enjoy health and pros-

perity; whose carriage to her is churlish, and whose expressions to her are dipped in gall: Who exposes her natural defects before company, and aggravates her neglects: Who instead of comforting her, slights her; and is so far from healing her wounds, that he doth what he can to make them wider: Who doth not allow her convenient food and raiment; and lets her want those necessary supplies, which the law of nations binds him to: Who doth not protect her when she is in danger: Who doth not trust her with the affairs of the family, if she be able to manage them, or conceals from her the things which appertain to their common safety: Who goes beyond the bounds of the authority God hath given him over her; and, instead of being her head, makes himself a tyrant, and her a slave: Who doth not yield unto her reasonable requests, and by his good example encourage her to piety, gravity, charity, and discretion: Who despises her good counsel, and will be sooner persuaded by a stranger, than by her that lies in his bosom: Or who takes it ill that she should obey God more than him. Such a man doth not exercise himself unto godliness, but rather unto hardness of heart and impenitence.

6. And indeed the same may be said of the woman, that doth not discharge the duty of a Wife to a husband. If her religion shall deserve this name of exercising herself unto godliness, her great care must be, according to the Apostle's rule, to "reverence her husband." After him must be her desire; and it must be her glory to submit to him in the fear of God. In her mind she must value him as the image and glory of the great Creator. To love him must become natural to her; and to tend him, though ever so weak or calamitous, must be one great part of her care. Her conversation must be chaste; and the value she has for him must appear in her words and actions. She must fear him, as her master; and yet nothing must cause that fear but affection. She must deny herself for him; and, in things indifferent, his will must be her rule. Her submission must be hearty; and it must not be any sinister respect, but con-

science, that produces it. She must wave her privileges of birth and breeding; and honour him according to the Law of Him that joined them. Her study must be to make his life comfortable; and she must contrive soft expressions to engage his inclinations. Her language to him must be mild and peaceable, and her behaviour such as becomes a woman that professes godliness. Her conversation must be the same in his absence, that it is in his presence; and she must give him such demonstration of her kindness, that his heart may confide in her. To get a meek and quiet spirit, must not be the least part of her prayer; and insolence and haughtiness of spirit she must shun as the pestilence. She must be a stranger to brawling; and her words must be weighed in a balance. She must flee idleness; and contrive how to advance her husband's interest with honesty. She must encourage her servants to their labour, and guide them by her eye. Her ears must be open to her husband's counsel; and she must not think much of his reproof. The entertainment she gives him must be with a cheerful countenance: and crossness of humour must be banished from her. If ought have provoked him, she must study arts to pacify him; and whatever heat she finds him in, she must study how to allay the inflammation. His anger she must overcome by meekness; and, if he be inclined to passion, take the fittest opportunities to hush those tempests. In expenses she must move by his advice; and, the propriety being in him, consult him upon such occasions. His kindness to her must not make her usurp authority over him; and the more he condescends to her, the more she must oblige him.

7. If I mean to exercise myself unto godliness as a Minister of the Gospel, I must be more concerned for men's souls than for a maintenance; and I do little, if I do not study to advance the people's happiness. I must not sew pillows under their elbows, nor flatter them with easy injunctions into ruin. I must not speak peace to them, when there is none; nor tell them that they are in God's favour, when their aversion from Gospel-duties shows

them reprobates. I must become an intercessor for them at the throne of grace; and be more than ordinarily importunate with God, to pour out upon them the SPIRIT of grace and supplication. My life must be holy; I must not tell them of one way, and go another; I must let them see that I am in good earnest when I preach to them, and that I do not give them a cast of my office only, when I fright them with damnation. They must see, that I myself am afraid of God's judgments, and have deliberately chosen that seriousness, which I press upon them by a thousand arguments. I must inquire into their wants; and labour to suit my plaster to their wounds. I must give them warning, that they fall not into the snare of the Devil; and, if they be caught in it, see by what way I may extricate them from that danger. I must open my heart and bosom to them; and convince them that nothing is so pleasing to me, as to advance their spiritual interest. I must be instant in season, and out of season; and exhort, and rebuke, with all long-suffering and doctrine. The sins I reprove in them I must hate like poison; for in vain do I bid them abstain from the forbidden tree, if I stretch forth my hand to eat of it. I must visit them when they are sick; and make myself acquainted with their necessities. I must relieve the poor, so far as I am able; and, by my zeal and gentleness, win even upon those that hate me. I must comfort the weak-hearted, and strengthen the feeble knees. I must meditate on the Scriptures, and make it my business to know the will of God. I must be able to resolve their doubts, and to confute such as creep in unawares to pervert their souls. I must learn to rule my own house well, that I may be able to prescribe good rules to others; and must not neglect the gift that is in me, but study how I may lay out myself for the promotion of God's glory.

8. On the other side, if I would have my conscience bear me witness that I exercise myself unto godliness, as a Hearer, I must be sure to obey them who have the rule over me; and count them worthy of double honour who

labour in the word and doctrine. I must look upon them as ambassadors from **GOD**; and respect them as messengers of the **LORD OF HOSTS**. I must learn to see **GOD** in them; and must look farther than their outside, even to the commission which **GOD** hath given them. I must not despise them, because they carry this treasure in earthen vessels; nor think the worse of them, because they are men of the same passions that I am. I must not contemn the whole function, because some wolves get in among the sheep; nor blaspheme the order, because there is a **JUDAS** in the college of **JESUS**. I must be kind to them for **GOD**'s sake; and remember that the cup of cold water which I give to them, I give to Him that sent them. I must not deny them maintenance; nor let them labour without encouragement. I must remember, that such labourers are worthy of their hire; and that they deserve so much the more, by how much their pains are of a sublimer nature. I must consult with them in my perplexities, and in my doubts be guided by their directions. I must have recourse to them when I lie under strong temptations, and reveal my case to them, that they may know how to apply a remedy. I must ask seriously of them, what I must do to inherit eternal life; and, when I know it, must run and make haste to do it. I must consider that they watch for my soul; and make that an argument to express my love to them upon all occasions. I must not think any thing that is bestowed upon them as thrown away; but believe that it will, in some way or other, descend upon me in richer showers. I must not show myself froward, when they reprove; nor fall out with them, because they preach no doctrine that pleases my sensual appetite. I must so love them, as to stand up for them when they are traduced; and think it my duty to speak and act for them, to whom I am more beholden than to the nearest relations.

9. I cannot exercise myself unto godliness as a Magistrate, except I protect the innocent, and punish the guilty. I must be a terror to evil-doers, and an encourager of those that do well. I must secure those that are com-

mitted to my care against dangers; and must not suffer cruel men to oppress them. I must seek their welfare, to the best of my power; and neglect no lawful means to advance their prosperity.

10. If I mean to exercise myself unto godliness as a Subject, I must look upon my Prince as God's Vicerent, and stand in awe of that authority which the ALMIGHTY hath stamped upon him. I must not speak evil of Dignities; nor report things abroad which are to my King's discredit. I must submit to his orders, when they contradict not the injunctions of the greater Lawgiver; and live peaceably under his government. I must not sow sedition among my neighbours; nor fill them with prejudice against their lawful Governor. I must suffer rather than resist; and be persuaded, that those who resist shall receive to themselves condemnation. I must cheerfully give him the tribute I owe him; and pay him that honour which the law of God and nature doth allow him. I must not rashly censure his actions, because I do not apprehend the reason of them; and forbear judging of them, till I know the cause that moved him. I must not only have a due veneration for him in my heart, but must express it in my gestures too; and my outward behaviour to him must show, that I look upon him as a mortal god. If he falls into any scandalous sins, I must not attempt to reform him by insurrection; but must address myself to that God in whose hands the hearts of princes are, and leave it to his power and goodness to make him a man after his own heart.

11. The Master doth not exercise himself unto godliness, who doth not train up the child, under his charge, in the way he is to go: Who doth not season his mind with a form of sound words; and, whilst he infuses learning into him, teach him how to behave himself to God, and to his neighbour: Who doth not break the stubborn youth by admonition, and just correction: Who doth not check the first beginnings of sin in him; or lets the tares run on, till they choke the good seed sown there: Who doth not

teach him to stand in awe of his **MAKER** ; or doth not by his serious deportment show him how he may render himself beloved, and beneficial to mankind.

12. If I am **Rich**, and mean to exercise myself unto godliness, I must remember, that I am **God's** steward, and sent hither to disperse the blessings which he hath bestowed upon me, among those whom he hath made objects of my charity. I must not oppress the poor man, because he cannot hurt me ; nor deny another man what is due to him, because he hath no power to withstand me. I must make myself friends of the mammon of unrighteousness ; and so husband that estate which I have, as to provide for everlasting habitations. I must not think myself the better man for my riches ; nor fancy that **God** will be more kind to me in the last day, because my enjoyments were greater here than those of my neighbours. I must mistrust my own prosperity, and look upon it as more dangerous than the greatest misery. I must walk circumspectly in my affluence ; and take heed that my heart be not set on things which, before I am aware, will make themselves wings, and fly away. I must make the poor my pensioners, and lay up a good foundation against the time to come. I must be liberal and bountiful, as I expect that **God** should be munificent to me ; and believe that I am unjust, if I do not, according to my ability, provide for **CHRIST's** distressed members. I must learn to be humble in the midst of my plenty ; and the more blessings **God** heaps upon me, the more I must grow in grace and holiness. I must study how I may do good ; and make it the great concern of my life so to deport myself in this condition, that I may inherit eternal life.

As a **Poor Man**, I then exercise myself unto godliness, when I am contented with the condition in which I am placed, and labour, in the sweat of my brow, to get mine own bread ; when I go upon this principle, "He that will not work, neither shall he eat ;" when I envy not the rich, and rejoice in having but food and raiment, as much as

others do in a great inheritance; when I labour to be poor in spirit, and keep myself from repining and mistrusting God's Providence; when I am ambitious of the riches of grace, and thirst after nothing so much as the treasure which thieves cannot steal away; when the kingdom I seek is the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and nothing engrosses my desires so much, as to be always abounding in the work of the LORD, forasmuch as I know that my labour is not in vain in the LORD.

O Sirs, retire, and think of the reasonableness of this Exercise. O that we could make you see the necessity of it! O that it lay in my power to persuade you to it! But it is not eloquence that will do it; GOD'S SPIRIT must breathe upon you; and O that this blessed SPIRIT would blow upon you, and compel you to come in, and make you so sensible of the love of God, that you might not be able to withstand its force! You would then see, how much those men are mistaken, who place all their religion in a few heartless prayers, and will not believe that God ever commanded this faithful discharge of the duties of their several relations and callings.

We have innumerable examples of men, who even in this life have felt the burden of God's anger, for their unfaithful discharge of these duties. How many fathers have groaned under a sense of neglect of their duty to their children? How many children have smarted for the neglect of theirs to their parents? How hath God punished Princes, how hath he visited subjects, for their carelessness of their mutual offices? How many servants have complained that they have been undone, because their masters admonished them not? How many masters have been ruined, because their servants remembered not what faithfulness, and what duties, God required at their hands? And if God's anger against these neglects be so heavy in this life, what will it be in the day of indignation? The judgments which God sends upon men here, are but shadows of the future; emblems of greater plagues in another world; repre-

sentations of more violent storms that are to follow. **GOD** punishes some only that the rest may take warning; and those whom he punishes, he punishes but gently,—to show that if these rods cannot soften men's hearts, they are but the fore-runners of more dreadful scourges.

THE PRAYER.

MOST glorious **GOD**! who hast fitted thy holy **Laws** to my wants and necessities, and, in commanding me, dost consult my advantage more than thy profit; how am **I** bound to praise and magnify thy bounty! Thou hast taught me how to behave myself in all conditions. As these are part of the blessings of thy right-hand, so let my soul admire them above those of thy left. Whatever estate **I** am in, whatever relation, calling, or station, give me grace to adorn it with a suitable conversation. Teach me how to behave myself wisely in a perfect way. **O** when wilt thou come unto me! **O** let me remember, that, in the calling in which thou hast placed me, thou hast called me to certain duties, of which thou wilt take an account. **O** convince me that **I** am not called to idleness, but to labour in thy vineyard. **I** am backward to any thing that requires circumspection; but renew thou a right spirit within me. Be thou exalted, **LORD**, above the heavens, and thy glory above all the earth. If thou wilt but appear in my soul, every thing will yield; and every rebellious lust will bow to thy majesty. Nothing can resist thy omnipotence; and whatever desire in me hath been hitherto rebellious, will be frightened at thy presence, and retire, or become subject to thy power. **O** prepare mercy and truth, which may preserve me; and my mouth shall sing of thy righteousness. **O** let me remember that every new relation brings a new obligation upon me; and that if **I** regard not that obligation, **I** am unfaithful to my **GOD**. In every condition, in every relation, let me consider the duties incumbent upon me, and be zealous to discharge them. Let not the ex-

ample of others tempt me to neglect them. O tell my soul, that it is better to have thy favour, than the applause of men; and teach me to prize it, that I may be content to leave all, in order to obtain it, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD. Amen.

THE ELEVENTH EXERCISE.

To resist all sorts of Temptations.

THIS Exercise is peremptorily commanded in *James* i. 12, 13; *James* iv. 7; 1 *Pet.* v. 8, 9; *Ephes.* v. 15; and *Heb.* xii. 4. The conquest of temptations makes the great difference between a true believer and a hypocrite; and there is not a surer sign that a man is perishing, than his being loth to encounter these enemies.

Temptations may come from friends, as well as from enemies; and a father, or a mother, may be a tempter, as well as our greatest adversaries. Temptations may arise from ourselves, as well as from strangers; and our own bosoms may furnish us with fuel for sin, as much as outward objects. And indeed there are no temptations so dangerous, as those that come from within; and the Devil himself could do us no hurt, but that our own hearts second his fatal enterprise. Outward objects can only present themselves to our minds; but our minds make the first motion to transgression. He that resists his evil thoughts, resists the strongest rebels; and what can all other assaults signify, while the mind is guarded against invasion?

Of all the temptations of the DEVIL, there are none which he values so much, as those which are levelled either against our venturing on the Power of Godliness, or against continuing in Seriousness.

1. Such as are levelled against our venturing on the Power of Godliness. The DEVIL is content that we should

play about the outsides of religion, in the ante-chamber to true piety: as long as he can keep us from the banqueting-house, the banner whereof is love, he can bear with our little acts of worship. The inconsiderable services which proceed from custom, he doth not value: and he is content that we should use a form of godliness; being sensible that hypocrisy will damn us as soon as much more open debaucheries.

2. Such as are levelled against our holding out in Seriousness. He knows to whom the crown is promised, even to him that is faithful unto death; and hath seen **GOD** set the diadem of righteousness on the heads of those that have continued with **CHRIST JESUS** in his temptations. He knows the Scripture, and is sensible, that the man who holds out to the last will certainly enjoy the delights of **GOD's** bosom; and therefore to conquer such a man, who labours hard for salvation, and to stop him in his progress, he looks upon as his proudest victory. Antiquity hath expressed it by this fable. **LUCIFER** having sent out his Officers to fill the world with death and ruin, they all went on their several errands. Upon their return, he demanded an account of their proceedings, what mischief they had done, and what plagues they had scattered. One of them, more forward than the rest, replied, that he had been a fortnight wandering about, and at last had overturned a fleet of ships at sea, so that both men and goods were lost. The Prince of Darkness, enraged at his laziness, instead of a reward, gave him a hundred lashes, because he had done no more hurt in all that time. Another Spirit stood forth, and boasted that he had been for a month contriving how to set such a city on fire, and had at last effected it; and he also was severely punished for his idleness and neglect in accomplishing his design no sooner. At last came forth a third, who had been forty years absent; and being asked how he had spent his time, he answered, "These forty years have I been tempting such a religious man to fornication, and have at last prevailed: and at this time he wallows in his sin." **BEELZEBUB** immediately arose from his throne; caressed the fiend: and commended him, as having done a

greater exploit, after forty years' travail, than the other by afflicting and consuming so many men, and ships, and houses, in a few days. The moral is this, That if he can make a sincere believer weary of his heavenly-mindedness, and burning zeal for God's glory, he values that injury more, than if he tempted a thousand reprobates to greater impieties.—Therefore the holier men are, the more they may expect the Devil's assaults; and the richer their souls are in faith and good works, the more they may look for the rage of this roaring lion.

To resist these two grand temptations is the intent of this Exercise; which consists, 1. In arming ourselves with the word of God. 2. In praying for help from above against such assaults. 3. In getting others to pray for us, and to counsel us. 4. In being more cautious for the future, in case the temptation prevail.

1. *In arming ourselves with the Word of God.* With this sword CHRIST cut the Devil's temptations asunder; with this shield the Apostles weathered his fiercest tempest; with this helmet the saints of old blunted his sharpest arrows; and he that hath no skill at this weapon must resist but weakly, will fight but with feeble hands, and at the best cannot hold out long.

2. *In praying against temptation.* This hath in all ages been counted a part of this exercise; and he that considers with what force temptations come upon us sometimes, will believe it necessary to call in the Divine Arm for our assistance. This was the command of Him, who was tempted in all things, as we ourselves, yet without sin: (*Matt. xxvi. 41* :) and what is impossible with men is easily effected by Him whose power cannot by searching be found out. Nothing can be difficult to Omnipotence; and as dreadful as some temptations seem, if the help of God's SPIRIT be called down by fervent prayer, they melt as wax before the fire.—In these prayers, the chief things to be begged of God are power and courage to overcome the temptation, not freedom from all temptations. For the most part, it is safer to pray that the temptation may not overcome us, than that it may totally leave us. For temp-

tations make us watchful, help to polish our souls, and advance our assurance of salvation.

3. *In getting others to pray for us.* At many times God wisely doth not grant the blessing which we pray for, on purpose that we may get others to join with us in our prayers. So did ST. PAUL, as we read in 2 *Thess.* iii. 1, 2, and in 2 *Cor.* i. 11. Joint forces do storm heaven; and when prayers mount up, as DAVID went into the temple with the multitude that keeps holy-day, the ALMIGHTY bows down his ear, and sends them away with a blessing. But then he who desires a religious man to pray for him, that God would give him grace to conquer, must join his own earnest endeavours with that good man's prayer; else he doth but mock God, and the holy man too.—This desiring others to pray for us, when assaulted by strong temptations, will give us opportunity to discover ourselves to the charitable man, whose assistance in prayer we desire; and will help us to defeat that stratagem of the Devil, whereby he keeps us from revealing the thoughts of our hearts, and the temptations we lie under, to those who are able, by their advice and counsel, to relieve us. How many souls have been restored to joy again, when they have broken through this snare, and opened to some faithful Minister that grief, which before lay heavy, and was ready to sink them into destruction.

4. *In rising again, and being more cautious for the future, in case a temptation prevail.* By this rising again, I do not mean, going round in a circle of repenting and sinning, and sinning and repenting; but if, after long and strong opposition, we fall against our wills, we must not lie st'ill one moment in the sin, but get up with speed, and put on greater resolution, and double our diligence, that we may not be surprised again.

Meantime, remember the torments of another world; and this will keep thee from fainting under all thy crosses and miseries here. Rejoice, because God doth visit thee; and have ever that memorable saying in thy mouth, "The LORD hath chastened and corrected me sore, but hath not

given me over unto death." If thou art iron, this fire will burn away thy rust. If thou art a saint, and sufferest such things, from these great conquests thou wilt be promoted to greater dignities in heaven. If thou art gold, this furnace will make thee finer. Is Satan's angel given thee to buffet thee? Rejoice to think, whom thou art like; for this was **ST. PAUL's** affliction, and **ST PAUL's** glory will fall to thy share.

THE PRAYER.

O LORD of Hosts, who is like unto thee! Thou rulest the raging of the sea; and when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them. Thou seest what temptations I am encompassed with, what enemies surround me, and how I am beset with dangers. Extend thy mercy to me, and send from above, and take me. Deliver me from my strong enemy, and from them which hate me. Leave me not to the rage of temptation; neither give me up to the will of those that persecute my soul. I will arise, **O GOD**, and fight the good fight. Teach me what temptations are, and give notice to my soul when I am in danger. I know, **O LORD**, that all places, callings, and employments, bring temptations with them! How diligent, how watchful ought I to be, that mine enemy rejoice not over me. Yet I will not be afraid; because if Thou art with me, I may defy all that are against my soul to destroy it: for thou, **LORD**, wilt bless the righteous; and with thy favour thou wilt compass him as with a shield. Up, **LORD**, and pluck thy hand out of thy bosom. Enable me to put on the whole armour of **GOD**. **O GOD**, I will cry day and night unto thee; give me wisdom and resolution to secure thy favour. I cannot secure it, except I hate the works of them that hate Thee, and am grieved with those that rise up against Thee. **O LORD**, mine own flesh, and the world, and messengers from hell, are confederate against Thee. **O** teach my hands to war, and my fingers to fight. My rock, my fortress, my deliverer, my **GOD**, my strength, in

whom I will trust, my buckler, and the horn of my salvation; cover thou my head in the day of battle. Let mine eye see my desire on the temptations which annoy me. Hear my voice out of thy temple, and let my cry come before Thee, even into thine ears. Give me power to climb thy holy hill. When I faint, LORD, support me; when I grow weary, furnish me with fresh motives to hold on; when I would go back, persuade me to press toward the mark; when I fall, let thy Angels bear me up in their hands. O Thou that hast done great things for me, strengthen my faith, that I may endure temptation, and, being tried, may receive the crown of righteousness, which thou hast promised to them that love thee, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD.



THE TWELFTH EXERCISE.

To stand in awe of God, even when we are alone, and no creature sees us.

THIS Exercise is commanded in *Psalms* cxxxix. 1—5; iv. 4; x. 12, 14; and *Heb.* iv. 13. One would think, that the bare belief of the being of GOD would be a sufficient argument to any man to fear Him, even when he is alone, and to behave himself with that reverence and decency which he would use, were the greatest monarch of this world present with him. But, alas! the generality of men dare do that in private, when none but GOD and they are together, which they would be afraid to do before the meanest slave. They dare to think that before GOD, which they would tremble to utter before men; and harbour things in their hearts in the sight of the ALMIGHTY, which they would not, for a world, that men should know.

A Christian is a man of another temper, and exercises himself unto godliness, when he is alone, as well as when

he converses with his neighbours. Nay, he is more industrious to please his kind and merciful Master, when retired from the sight of men, than he ordinarily is when the world looks upon him. He is afraid of sin, though there be no Magistrate near to over-awe him; and durst not commit any thing that is offensive to God, or injurious to his neighbour, were he in a desert or a den. He is sensible that no place can escape an all-seeing eye; and that there is no corner so secret but the Father of Lights shines into it. He remembers that God will call him to an account for secret sins, as well as for notorious offences; and therefore hath the same veneration for his holiness, when all men are gone from him, as he hath when he is surrounded with society. He lives in the sense of God's Omnipresence; and whether he is on a hill, or in the valley, God is the same to him. The place, he knows, makes no variation in God's purity; and wherever the man is, God cannot be far from him. He pities, or smiles, at the sinner who flatters himself that God sees him not, because he lurks in a cave; and nothing appears so absurd to him, as to fancy that he who made the eye should not pierce into the remotest corner.

Behold, Christian, when thou art alone, that God is with thee, and in thee, and stands by thee, before whom all Angels veil their faces; at whose presence Devils tremble, and who fills heaven and earth with his glory. That God is with thee, who is altogether lovely; the centre of thy happiness, before whom "all nations are as grasshoppers, as the small dust of the balance, and as a drop at the bottom of a bucket;" who by his providence maintains thy soul in life, charges the Devil not to drag thee into hell, commands the powers of darkness not to molest thee or murder thee, takes care of thyself, thy wife, and thy children, and watches day and night over all that thou hast. He preserves thy house from being burned, thy children from being drowned, thy cattle from rotting, thy barns from being consumed by lightning. He commands, and thou takest thy rest; speaks the word, and no danger must come

nigh thee ; keeps thee as the apple of his eye, and bids his Angels to carry thee in their hands. This **God**,—this immense, this infinite, this bountiful, this gracious, this munificent Being,—is with thee, and about thee, every where ; especially when thou art by thyself, for then there is none with thee but **He**. And wilt not thou be conscientious in His presence ?

Was ever ingratitude like this ? The most ungrateful slave, however he rails against his benefactor behind his back, yet is afraid to do it in his presence. And will you revile **God** to his face ? What is your sinning against him, but reviling him ? What is your acting contrary to his will, but abusing him ? And if he be in the room with you, and looks you in the face when you do so, do not you reproach him to his face ? And dare you do that to **Him**, which you dare not do to a man of greater power than you ? Must you sin, because **He** doth not punish ; or transgress his laws, because by his mercies **He** would oblige you to repentance ? Will you slight **Him**, because **He** is kind ; or undervalue **Him**, because **He** caresses you to happiness ?

Sinner, did the **LORD JESUS** appear to thee in a visible shape, while thou art alone in thy closet, wouldest not thou behave thyself humbly, modestly, and seriously, and suit thy thoughts and actions to the presence of so glorious a Being ? Why, **CHRIST'S** Divinity is with thee *now* ; and cannot his Divinity have the same influence upon thy spirit that his Humanity would have ? Is not his Divine above his Human Nature ; and is not the Deity more excellent than the most glorious image or representation ?

Inconsiderate man ! If thou art minded to offend **God**, get curtains that can hide thee from his sight ; for if **He** see, what madness is it to conspire against **Him**, before **Him** ? Go, get where **God** sees not, and then do what thou wilt ! But now, **God** stands with infinite ears, and eyes, and understanding, about thee ; and with as strong application of spirit, as if he left the contemplation of himself, to pierce thee with all his beams. And for **Him** to see thy disloyal-

ties is a greater shame, than if they were represented on all the theatres of the world !

“Fear the LORD, all ye his saints, for there is no want to them that fear Him.” The man who fears Him, from a sense of his omnipresence, can lack nothing ; for he can lack no strength to arrive at the highest degree of holiness. This sense will call him away from all absurd and indecent actions ; it will not suffer him to fall into sin ; and, like the hands of Angels, it will preserve his foot from running against a stone. As a large and spreading oak, deeply rooted in the earth, mocks the rage of winds ; so a soul, in whom this sense is fixed, can sing securely under all outrages. “My flesh trembles for fear of thee :” so we read in *Psalm* cxix. 120. The Septuagint renders it, “Fix, or nail, my flesh, with thy fear ;” because the Hebrew word signifies both : And the word thus taken is very emphatical ; for as the man, whose hands and feet, and body, are nailed to a tree, can stir no where ; so he that lives in a mighty sense of the ALMIGHTY’s presence, dares not stir from the straight way.

THE PRAYER.

O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me : thou knowest my down-sitting and mine up-rising ; thou understandest my thoughts afar off ; thou compassest my path, and my lying-down, and art acquainted with all my ways. I beseech thee over-awe me with thy presence. O that thou wert in all my thoughts ! O how sweet, how delightful, how glorious art Thou ! Could I always think of Thee, how poor would the world, and all things in it, seem in mine eyes ! Did I look upon Thee more, I should be so delighted with thy beauty, that sin would be loathsome to me. I sin against thee, because I lose the sight of thee. The eye of my understanding was given to me on purpose to look upon Thee ! O let me use it to that end ! When I am loth to look upon thee, LORD, press thou into my

thoughts, so that I may not be able to shake off thy presence. If I see thee, I shall not dare to offend thee: Who would offend so dear a friend, if he look upon him? When any sin would insinuate into my affections, O call me, and say, "Thy God is here;" and that name will withhold me from those crooked ways. Henceforward be thou ever with me. Let no base objects intervene betwixt my sight and thy glorious self; or if they do, help me to look off, and to return to my centre. Make strong impressions of thy omniscience and omnipresence upon my heart; that no sensual object, no pleasing temptation, no deceit, no flattery, may rob me of my integrity. At the brightness of thy presence, let all mine enemies vanish; and be thou my conqueror, my triumph, my beauty, and my glory, through JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. Amen.

THE THIRTEENTH EXERCISE.

To do all things to God's Glory.

THIS Exercise is commanded in 1 *Cor.* x. 31; *Colos.* iii. 17; *Ephes.* v. 20; and *Thess.* v. 18. It consists, 1. In giving thanks for every blessing we enjoy. 2. In doing all things, whether civil or religious, with an intent to promote God's glory.

1. *In giving thanks for every blessing we enjoy.* He that is not sensible of the great necessity of this Exercise hath never heard of what MOSES, DAVID, ST. PAUL, and the whole army of saints, have done; and he that knows not what it means, hath certainly forgotten the end of his coming into the world. Not to give God thanks for the blessings we possess, is to be a beast, nay, worse than a beast; for the very dragons praise God in their kind. See *Psalms* cxlviii. 7. And yet to thank him without consideration of what we

do, adds nothing to our happiness. To give God thanks, requires the attention of the mind ; and the man that praises Him must seriously break forth into astonishment at his goodness. Every blessing must lift up my heart to heaven ; and every mercy I receive must make my soul adore the hand that sent it. He that in his blessings reflects only on the second causes, whereby they were procured, robs God of his honour ; and to ascribe any mercy to mine own wisdom, or industry, or friends, is no less than sacrilege. I must see God in every blessing, and take notice of his gracious Providence in the dispensation. I must not feed on it as beasts upon grass, without regard to Him that made it grow ; and indeed, I cannot put a greater affront in this case upon the ALMIGHTY, than by not considering the operations of his hands. Every blessing hath the stamp of God upon it ; it bears his image and superscription ; and therefore it is injurious not to give to God the things that are God's.

But, 2. The greater part of the Exercise is yet behind ; and that is, *To do all things, whether civil or religious, with an intent to promote God's glory.* Even many of those that seem to do more than others, are defective in this duty. I must preach, and pray, and sing psalms, to God's glory ; and drink, and eat, and lie down, and sleep, and visit, and discourse, and follow the works of my lawful calling, to God's glory. When I eat and drink, I must not do it to please my appetite, but to be more serviceable to my Master in heaven. When I visit, I must have a design of edification in it. When I am going to take my rest, it must not be with an intent merely to refresh my body, but chiefly with an intent to be the better able to do my Master's work. When I enter upon the works of my calling, my design must be to please God, and to obey his will ; not to provide for the ease and satisfaction of my flesh. When I arise in the morning, I must rise with an intent to spend that day for eternity ; and whatever I do, I must do it to please God, not to please myself. But, above all, my religious duties must have no other design, but that God

may be glorified by them ; and that his name may be advanced, and his honour spread, must be the end of all my aims and supplications. CHRIST's interest must be my interest ; and I am no complete Christian, till GOD becomes all in all to me. To be a favourite of Heaven, this must be my motto, "To me to live is CHRIST : " and I must not only say so, but say it with such seriousness, that I may be able to call GOD to witness that it is so.

This is what CHRIST means, by bidding us take care, that *our eye be single*. It must aim at one thing only, *viz.* GOD's glory. If it looks upon more objects at once, it confounds itself. There cannot be a nobler mark than this ; and there is nothing more proper for our souls than this employment. This is to be, with JESUS, about our Father's business, and to mind the end for which we came into the world. This is to conform to GOD, and to be workers together with him in the enlargement of his kingdom. This is what we pray for when we say, "Thy kingdom come ; " and we then live according to our prayer, when the advancement of that kingdom is our constant endeavour. There can be no greater commendation, than that we seek to bring all back again to the fountain from which they had their being.

This is to make religion the darling of our souls ; and he answers the great design of his Maker, who takes care that GOD may be in all his thoughts. He that doth so, shows that he delights in GOD, and that GOD hath engrossed his joy. Then delight in GOD is come to a just pitch, when the soul is thus eager to advance GOD's glory ; and then the mind doth truly taste how sweet and gracious the LORD is, when GOD's honour becomes an ingredient of all his designs and purposes.

THE PRAYER.

O GOD, who is like unto Thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders ! Thy glory is the end of all created beings. Thou art decked with beauty and glory ;

glorious is thy name ; and to glorify thee is not only our duty, but our interest too. O let my heart be touched with a sense of thy glory. Let me admire the glory of thy kingdom. If thou wouldest vouchsafe to display thy glory in my benighted soul, how should I despise this miserable world ! How should I scorn the lust of the eye, and the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life ! I have talked of thy glory ; but O how little have I aimed at it in my actions ! What base ends have I had in my services ! O Father of Mercy, purify my intentions, and rectify my designs. Give me a right aim in all things. I am sent into the world to advance thy glory : O let it not be said that I sought mine own glory ! How great is thy goodness, that thou wilt employ so wretched a creature in promoting thy glory, who canst live without me, and be happy and glorious without me ! O glorify my soul, that I may glorify thee ! In all the blessings, in all the mercies I enjoy, let me give thee all the glory. What have I, that I have not received ? Why then should I glory, as if I had not received it ? O let me study how I may do good in my generation. Let the SPIRIT of Glory and of CHRIST rest upon me ! O Father of Glory, let me see what is the glory of thy inheritance. Open thou my lips, O LORD, and my mouth shall show forth thy praise. Guide me by thy counsel here, and hereafter receive me into glory. O that this heart of mine were more spiritualized. LORD, speak the word, and deliver me from myself. Assure me that the degrees of my future glory will be proportioned to the degrees in which I advance thy glory here. O let me abound in good works ; and let doing good be my great delight, forasmuch as I know that my labour is not in vain in the LORD. Thou hast promised it ; and thou wilt do it. I believe ; LORD, help mine unbelief, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD. Amen.

THE FOURTEENTH EXERCISE.

*To stir up, and exercise our graces, as we have occasion;
and to grow stronger in the grace of God.*

THIS Exercise is commanded in 2 *Tim.* i. 6; 2 *Pet.* i. 5—8; iii. 18; 1 *Thess.* iii. 12; and iv. 1. By this Exercise I do not only mean, that when we are tempted to any sin, we should practise the contrary virtue; but that we should become eminent in those virtues, the seeds whereof lie scattered in our souls.

My Faith must not only engage me to praying and hearing; but must raise my soul to a transcendent love of the Law of God, to an insatiable hungering and thirsting after Him, to a mighty delight in his presence, to a sacred grief in his absence, and to resolutions to seal the Truth of God with my own blood.

My Hope must force me to repose all my concerns on his holy Providence; make me pray with fervour, and incessantly; and lead me on to trust Him in most desperate plunges, making me ashamed to think that a patient should trust his health with a physician, and that I should not trust myself to the conduct of Him who hath done all things well, who defends all creatures, even to the snail, and the least root of grass, and who showers down blessings even on his enemies, and therefore cannot possibly be supposed to forsake those who hope in him.

My Patience must not only extend to such wrongs, as do not blemish much either my fortune or reputation; but I must learn to bear greater blows, even the censures of good men. Yea, I must no longer call afflictions miseries, but donatives of mercy, gifts that come from my dearest friend, God, who means to conduct me to my happiness. I must learn, as I am a Christian, not to be rich and pompous, and take my pleasure in the world; (God need not have shed tears and blood, and given precepts, for this;) but to bear the cross, and to become conformable to the sufferings of

JESUS. In a word, I must learn to fear nothing so much, as that **GOD** will give over afflicting me.

My Love to **GOD** must teach me to embrace mean and painful things for **GOD**; to bear inconvenience in duties with patience; to be undiscouraged in successless labours; to root out vice, and plant virtue, in all that depend upon me. My Love must be so exercised; till **GOD** becomes the life of my soul, and the light of mine eyes, and till I can say, "**LORD**, here I am, send me; give me grace to do what thou dost command, and then command what thou wilt. I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine." O, my love, my life, my desire, my delight, my riches, my treasure, my all, my happiness, my hope, my comfort, my beginning, my end,—too late have I known thee, too late have I loved thee; O that I had loved thee sooner!

My Charity to my neighbour is but in its infancy, while I am only respectful to him without prejudicing myself: but it must be exercised, till it grows large and diffusive; it must extend to his soul, as well as to his body; and teach me to be tender of his credit, compassionate in his calamities, and hopeful in his distress. It must constrain me to rejoice at his prosperity, to admonish him to holiness, to encourage him to good works, and to forgive him, even as I hope to be forgiven in the day of our **LORD JESUS**.

Then I exercise all these graces, when I work them into greater solidity; when of feeble, I make them lusty and vigorous, and of fickle and uncertain, fixed, constant, and immoveable, until I come to abound in the work of the **LORD JESUS**: And into this strength and glory they may be wrought by the assistance of **GOD**'s free and generous **SPIRIT**, who is nigh unto them that call upon him,—unto all such as call upon him in truth.

Of the necessity of this Exercise none can doubt, who doth but take pains to read over the several Parables of the Gospel. All the exhortations, all the admonitions, all the counsels, in Scripture, to steadfastness, and abounding, and increasing, and going on to perfection, do with one mouth, and with one voice, proclaim the necessity of this Exercise.

THE PRAYER.

O THOU who art a strong tower to all them that run unto thee : Take care of my immortal soul ! If thou wilt charge thyself with her welfare, I shall be safe. I have been very slothful hitherto. I have lost much time, many opportunities, many advantages of spiritual life. I know that I must grow on to a perfect man in CHRIST JESUS. Thou dost not allow me to stand still. O purify me from all sin. LORD JESUS ! give me thy SPIRIT, that I may be filled with spiritual wisdom and understanding ; and, for the glory set before me, may be content to do and suffer cheerfully whatever thou shalt think fit to charge me with. Come, LORD ! make a reformation in this poor, blind, distressed, and miserable soul ; my faith is weak, my hope is weak, my love is weak, my charity is weak. One word of thy mouth would put vigour and life into me. The same word that made the sun shine out in the first creation, would make my grace bright ; and that sentence, “ Let there be light,” spoken to my soul, would change the dark chaos into a globe of light. O make goodness habitual to my soul. O that it might be an everlasting inhabitant in me ! O that my soul might become its proper seat, from which it might never depart ! Ah ! how inconstant is my zeal ! Hot I am to-day, and cold to-morrow. Sometimes I seem to lay force on the everlasting kingdom ; a little while after I fall in love again with the world. O destroy this weed of inconstancy in my garden. All this comes from the weakness of my virtues. Hence it is, that I am not the same every where ; and that I, who am bold in one place to stand up for thy glory, am a coward in another. Where is thy mighty arm, O LORD ; where are thy bowels ? Fill my languishing soul with strength and wisdom from above, that I may increase and abound more and more in love. Perfect what thou hast begun in me. Let meekness, and humility, and all the graces of the HOLY GHOST, become natural to me. O that they were incorporated with my temper ! O

O that they were so riveted into my soul, that I might not be able to act contrary to them ! O that I might find as great a reluctancy, when I am tempted to neglect them, as formerly I found when thy SPIRIT commanded me to perform them ! O into how sweet a frame do these graces put the soul ! Blessed JESUS, be not tired of taking pains with this miserable soul ! Thou hast been wonderfully kind to me ; O be not weary of being farther gracious and favourable ! O let me find, by blessed experience, that I grow in grace, that every thing in thy service becomes more easy, and that what formerly was a burden to me, is now pure delight to my soul. O my GOD, gild my soul once more with thy radiant beams, and establish my heart unblameable in holiness unto the coming of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. Amen.



THE FIFTEENTH EXERCISE.

Every night, before you go to bed, call yourself to an account for the actions of the day ; and examine your heart and life, how you have discharged your duty towards God, and towards man.

THIS Exercise is commanded in *Psalm* iv. 4 ; *2 Cor.* xiii. 5 ; and *Jer.* viii. 6. It is the life of all the rest ; and the grand reason why men make no greater progress in goodness is because they do not study and search their own lives and actions. How should we know what good we ought to do, except we examine what evil we commit ?

No man can be a good man, that neglects this Exercise. For every good man must be cautious of offending God ; but how can any man be cautious of offending him, that doth not search and see what it is that doth offend him, and whether his own actions be not the things that displease him ? Nothing will make a man more cautious, than this

frequent calling of himself to an account ; and since every rational person, who chooses the end, must necessarily choose also the means which lead to that end, it will unavoidably follow, that he who is a good man, and cautious of offending God, cannot but resolve upon this self-examination, as the great means to arrive at that cautiousness.

Men to whom the word of God never came, have seen the necessity of this Exercise, and thought they could not be men without it ; and can we be Christians without it ? It was one of the canons of the Pythagorean Discipline, to call to mind what they had been doing in the day. And how like a Christian doth SENECA speak, when he tells his friend NOVATUS, “the heart must every day be called to an account.” So did the brave SEXTUS, before he composed himself to sleep. When day-light was shut in, he asked his heart, “What disease, what distemper of nature hast thou cured ? What sin hast thou withstood ? Wherein art thou better ?”—Wrath and anger will cool, if thus they be called to the bar every day. What can be more pleasant, than thus to explore the actions of the whole day ? How soft must that rest be, which succeeds that examination ! How sweet, how free, how easy must it be, when the soul is either commended or admonished ; and a man is his own judge, and turns critic upon his own life ? This power I use ; and every day I have pleadings in my soul, when the candles are taken away, and my wife, knowing my custom, hath left me to myself. I dive into the whole day, and measure my words and actions over again. I hide nothing from myself ; I pass by nothing that I have said or done ; for why should I be afraid of mine own errors, when I can say to my heart, “Take heed ; do so no more ; I forgive thee at this time.”

This Exercise appears to me so necessary, that I cannot forbear giving you what directions I can for the faithful performance of it.

1. *Let it not be done slightly, or superficially*, as careless servants sweep a room, leaving half of the rubbish

behind them. Some Christians there are, who being loth to be miserable hereafter, and sensible that CHRIST must be obeyed in every thing, will force themselves to do any thing which they hear is their duty ; but they do not properly perform the duty, but only something like it, in order that their hearts may not smite them for the total omission.—He who calls himself to an account for the sins he hath committed, and not for the neglects he hath been guilty of, doth the work by halves. And he who spends only a few thoughts upon his actions, and presently interrupts the task again with some other business, or who takes a careless survey of his behaviour, and mingles thoughts of the world, or of sensual pleasures, with those contemplations of himself, shows that he hath no desire, no appetite to this spiritual food, that the world doth yet engross his desires and affections, and that he doth not think heaven worth taking by violence.

2. *Go about it willingly and cheerfully ; not like men that seem angry with God, for laying such a yoke upon the neck of his disciples.* I do not deny but that the Devil and our own lusts will make objections against it ; pleading that it is not necessary, that we must mind the works of our calling, and that sleep will oppress us, if we go about this work at night, &c. The Devil did never yet let any man go quietly to heaven ; and therefore such impediments he will certainly throw in any man's way, who hath serious resolutions not to neglect it. But these objections must be courageously answered, vigorously resisted, and manfully opposed ; for the Strong Man will not leave the house, except you throw him out by force. He that is afraid of discomposing his soft lusts and passions, can do no good here ; and whatever unwillingness may steal upon us in this Exercise, our business must be to strive, and pray, and labour hard against it, and to resolve to cross it, whatever it cost us. Suggestions, that would make us unwilling to venture, must not be dandled, courted, or flattered, but must be beaten off with a strong hand.

3. *Let it be done with an intent to be better.* Whatever we do in religion, this must be our end. He that examines himself at night in course, or makes a formality of it, and hath no real intent to leave, and watch against, the sins and neglects which upon examination he finds in himself, or to become more serious, beats the air; and, what is worse, mocks the ALMIGHTY, and takes his Covenant in his mouth, while he hates to be reformed.

4. *Let it be done with some aggravation of the defects and errors of your lives, which you detect by examination.* The bare discovery of our neglects, or defects, will signify little, except they be represented to our minds in such black characters, as shall work a detestation of them. Being drawn in their native colours, and their offences heightened from circumstances, and the defects compared with the light and knowledge we have, with the encouragements, motives, and arguments which GOD is pleased to give us, with the various opportunities we enjoy, with the parts, gifts, and abilities which the ALMIGHTY hath bestowed upon us,—they will look more dreadful, and consequently the sight will make deeper impressions upon us. On the other side, when the influences, assistances, strength, and power against any sin or temptation, or any other mercy, which we have received in the day-time, are heightened, and made more lively, by considering our vileness, unworthiness, and wretchedness, and how undeserved these blessings are,—the heart will be more impressed by them, engaged to a more fervent love of GOD, and urged to run with greater alacrity in the way of his commandments.

5. *Those that have families should by all means exhort their Children and Servants to this Exercise;—such, I mean, as are capable of it.* And they are capable of it sooner than we are aware. This is certainly part of that “walking within our houses with a perfect heart,” which DAVID makes the qualification of a good housekeeper. (*Psal. ci. 2.*) Goodness is ever communicative; and no man loves GOD truly, who doth not desire that others should love Him as well as himself.—If this communing

with our own hearts be profitable to our own souls, why should it not be so to the souls committed to our trust ? If we think it necessary to our salvation, shall we think that those under our charge may find out another way to heaven ? If we look upon it as a preservative to guard us against sin, shall we leave those, whose souls, as well as bodies, we are to provide for, to secure themselves against sin as well as they can ? These are absurdities of which a Christian must not be guilty, except such Christians as the Angel of the Church of Sardis, who “ had a name that he lived, but was dead.”

A sense of the Necessity of this Exercise will soon dictate Methods to a soul that is solicitous concerning it. Be it in what Method it will, if it do but produce the effects it should do, it is acceptable to God.

Nor is it necessary that this Exercise must necessarily be performed at night. He that finds himself fittest and freshest for it in the morning, may call himself to an account for yesterday's actions at that time, and expect the same advantage by it. Some Christians are so watchful and jealous over their thoughts, and words, and actions, and desires, that this self-examination is their constant attendant, wherever they go ; and they have got such a habit of it, that whenever they think, or speak, or act, they immediately bring all to this touch-stone, and weigh it in this balance. They have a scheme of the will and precepts of God in their minds ; and if any action of theirs do in the least clash with God's will, their hearts presently smite them ; they are presently aware of it ; and they cry, “ LORD, be merciful unto me a sinner ! ”

That common argument which men allege as a discouragement from this Exercise, I must use as a powerful motive to oblige them to such self-examination. “ The Devil hinders them, and dissuades them from it,” they cry. But because he doth dissuade you, therefore you have reason more vigorously to apply yourselves to this Exercise. For he would fright you from it, because he sees that it will certainly make you leave his kingdom. His business

is to ruin souls, as ours is to save them. And there must needs be something more than ordinary in this duty, because he throws in so many impediments, to put a stop to this advantageous Exercise.

Happy is the man, who is not afraid of judging himself; who can look into this glass, and is not ashamed to see his own deformity, nor to behold what manner of man he is. This is the man of whom the SON of MAN will not be ashamed before GOD and his holy Angels. He that loves to look upon himself, shall see and taste how sweet and gracious the LORD is. O how much safer is it to let our children, (I mean our thoughts, and words, and actions,) pass through this fire now, than to leave ourselves altogether to the judgment of GOD in the last day? By being our own judges now, we may prevent the severity of the Judge of quick and dead in that day. By judging ourselves every day, the strength of our souls is renewed; our minds get new light, our affections new encouragements, our hearts new motives, and our inward man new arguments to shake off the clogs of sin, and of a deceitful world. How cheerfully will the man, who now sits as judge upon his own actions, be able to present himself before that dread tribunal. His heart will not suggest to him such fears and terrors as the man will find, who hath not thought this Exercise worth his care. He will be able to look upon CHRIST as his friend, as his advocate, as his intercessor, as his Mediator, that will stand between him and GOD's anger. His conscience will bid him take courage, and lift up his eyes with joy, because his redemption draws nigh. This must needs be so; for we are told by the Apostle, that "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged of the LORD." (1 Cor. xi. 31.) To judge ourselves, is to walk after the SPIRIT, and to mind the things of the SPIRIT; and we know that "there is no condemnation to them that are in CHRIST JESUS, who walk not after the flesh, but after the SPIRIT." (Rom. viii. 1.) When thus we call ourselves to an account, we act like the children of GOD,

—like children, that are afraid of offending their heavenly Father ; and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with CHRIST.

And these are the constant, daily, and standing Exercises to which all who name the name of CHRIST must necessarily apply themselves, if they will not rest in a form of godliness, and delude their own souls. Christianity is no idle calling ; and they that stroke themselves for being Christians, and sit with folded arms, and yawn and stretch themselves upon their couches, have learned their divinity of the Devil. **WORK HARD**, is the Christian Motto ; and nothing implies a greater contradiction than Idleness and Christianity. Shall any man talk of ease and softness, who in his baptism hath devoted himself to a continual warfare, and engaged himself to fight under the banner of JESUS ? The time of rest is to come ; the present time is designed for labour and trouble. A Christian must not look for rest here ; God hath promised him no such thing, till he comes to Heaven. Nothing in nature is idle ; and shall a Christian be the only idle thing in the world ?

I know there is no man but finds some business or other, to divert his thoughts ; but, in vain, Sirs, do you talk of business, while the business of your souls lies at sixes and sevens. No worldly employment deserves the name of business, in comparison of this, concerning which we speak. These Exercises are the business for which we come into the world ; and he is idle, that doth not work the work of God. Did ever any man hire a day-labourer, to see him only eat lustily, or walk up and down in the house with his hands in his pockets ? And can we be so unreasonable as to think that CHRIST hires us to take our pleasure here, when he hath so much work for us to do ? As our worldly business must be followed with industry and care, for the support of ourselves and families, so, in the midst of that, our great Master's work may be carried on ; and in the very works of our calling, his will must be so eyed and minded, that, when that and our business come to clash, our busi-

ness must give way to the other. And this is to spend the greatest part of our time in his service, when, not only in our set devotions, but in the very works of our calling, we make his will a lantern to our feet.

These Exercises will make you capable of being admitted to a friendship with the infinite Majesty of Heaven. “The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him,” saith the man that had found it by experience. (*Psal.* xxv. 14.) Through these Exercises the soul is freed from her dross, from carnal lusts and affections, and is made fit company for the Deity ; for so delighted is GOD with these Exercises, that the man who runs in this race is in a capacity of drinking of the rivers of GOD’s pleasures. “O how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee !” (*Psal.* xxxi. 19.)

GOD’s goodness is a treasure inexhaustible, and so full of charms, that the more a man thinks of it, the more he may. The thoughts of it put the soul into a kind of fever ; for the more she drinks of this living water, the more she may. Other arts and sciences a man may bring to perfection, and see the utmost of them : But as for GOD’s goodness there is no coming to the top of it ; the soul that contemplates it this hour, sees in it new mysteries the next ; and he that is ravished with the contemplation of it to-day, is ready to be overwhelmed in the admiration of it to-morrow. It is a fountain of life, which sends forth a thousand streams, and yet is as full as ever. It is the hiding-place of a holy soul ; and the Scripture means nothing else by GOD’s banqueting-house, but his goodness. This enriches the soul beyond all the wealth of which the world boasts : and I know not what name to give to its influences ; for, like the heat of fire, they can only be felt, but cannot be painted.

The lively sense of his goodness the ALMIGHTY vouchsafes to those who thus exercise themselves unto godliness ; for these are the men that fear him. The LORD is their shepherd, and they shall not want ; they shall not want a friend in adversity ; when lovers and friends are put far from them, and their acquaintance into darkness, GOD will

be their friend ; when they have no person to advise or to consult with, or to make their complaints to, He will guide them by his counsel ; when their flesh and their heart faileth, and all creatures fail them, God will be their strength and their portion for ever. He will hear their cry ; they shall unbosom themselves unto him, and he will bow down his ears to them, tell their wanderings, put their tears in his bottle, and write all their sighs and groans in his book. What a comfort is it to have a bosom-friend here on earth, to whom we can speak our minds, who will bear the burthen with us, and compassionate us, and to whom we can unlock and open the very inside of our hearts ! But then, what a comfort must it be to have God for my friend, to whom I can have recourse in all my necessities, and make my moan, and tell him how my heart is grieved ; who will not laugh at my calamity, nor mock when my fear comes ; whose bowels yearn over me, who will advise me for the best, and who will bid me lay my wearied head in his bosom.

“Such honour have all his saints.” So kind, so good, so wonderfully gracious is God, to all such as exercise themselves unto godliness, that they shall want nothing that is necessary either for soul or body. Their souls shall be fed with the promises of the Gospel, guided by the Eternal SPIRIT, and provided for from the store-house of grace and mercy. Their bodies shall never want ; God will either bless their industry, and the labours of their callings, as he did ST. PAUL’s diligence ; (2 *Thess.* iii. 8 ;) or turn the hearts of other men towards them, who shall relieve them, assist them, receive them, and redress their grievances, as he did in the case of ONESIMUS ; (*Philemon* 12 ;) or send an Angel from Heaven to feed them, as he did ELIJAH. (1 *Kings* xix. 6.) Nay, suppose that it should be expedient for God’s glory, that they suffer the want of necessaries, yet even then they shall not want grace to support them, courage to bear up under it, joy to keep their heads above water, and resolution to trust in him, though the LORD should kill them.

Christian, fancy that thou seest **DAVID** fighting with **GOLIAH** in a valley between two mountains; while on the one hand there lies encamped the army of the Philistines, on the other the host of Israel. Think what courage and resolution it must infuse into the young soldier's heart, to see himself gazed on by two armies of friends and enemies! Why, thy condition, when thou exercisest thyself unto godliness, is the same! Thou standest in this valley of tears: on one hill stands the great **GOD** of heaven and earth, with all the host of heaven; on the other are spread all the legions of hell, ready to triumph in thy fall. Can there be a greater encouragement, than to see the glorious **GOD** before thee, ready to set the laurel on thy temples, if thou darest follow after, that thou mayest apprehend that for which thou art also apprehended of **CHRIST JESUS**? Nay, he calls to thee from the hills of heaven, saying, "Fear not, for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine: When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee!" And shall not this tempt thee to do more than thy careless neighbours, more than nature will agree to? Arise, and depart; for here is not thy rest!—Rest! that is the glorious fruit of this tree of life; the comfort which these Exercises end in. The weary day-labourer after his toilsome work in the field, or the seaman after his labouring in storms and tempests, does not rest so sweetly, as he that exercises himself day and night unto godliness; for he rests on the down of Angels, on the wings of Cherubims, on the breast of **JESUS**; and shall rest ere long in **ABRAHAM**'s bosom, in the bosom of glory, in the bosom of everlasting mercy; where life is to be found in its perfection, life without sorrow, life without fear, life without corruption, life without disturbance, life without change, life without deformity, life without discontent, life without dishonour, life without envy, life without decay; where no adversary comes to molest it, no sin to spoil it—beauty, no temptation

to break its order, no Devil to discompose its harmony ; where the day is everlasting, the hours are measured by eternity, and the months and years by an infinity of bliss and glory.

Go to now, ye careless men, that are more frightened by these Exercises, than by all the terrors of the burning lake ! As laborious as these Exercises seem to be, without them expect no rest, no peace, no tranquillity ; for there is no peace, saith my God, unto the wicked. Expect grief, trouble, anguish, a turbulent soul, and an affrighted conscience ; for these must certainly be the portion of your cup one day. How should your life end in rest, who never tried your strength in these Exercises ? Lift up your eyes, and behold the man that exercises himself unto godliness ! Hear what becomes of him at his death ; “ Blessed are the dead, which die in the LORD, from henceforth ; yea, saith the SPIRIT, they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.” (*Rev.* xiv. 13.)

There remains therefore a rest for the people of God ; a rest, which tempests cannot shake, storms cannot annoy, frosts cannot chill, and heats cannot consume ; a rest, where there is joy without mourning, tranquillity without labour, honour without a period, wealth without danger of losing it, beatitude without the least shadow of calamity. What songs, what hymns, what music, what praises, what hallelujahs, what melody, what harmony, are to be met with there !—Where the spirits of men made perfect join, in perpetual concert, to sing salvation to our LORD, and to the LAMB for ever and ever ; where wickedness and malice must never look in ; where want and poverty must for ever cease ; where quarrelling and accusing and impleading one another will all be over ; where all violence and discord die, and all grief, and pain, and anguish, are swallowed up in an eternal jubilee !

I see the joyful day approaching,—I see it by the eyes of faith,—when this humble soul, this laborious saint, this self-denying Christian, this contemned man, shall change his rags into purple robes, and be translated from a

momentary sorrow to an eternity of satisfaction, where the LAMB that is in the midst of the throne shall feed him, and shall lead him into living fountains of waters, and GOD shall wipe away all tears from his eyes. Then shall be fulfilled the saying that is written: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy; He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

THE PRAYER.

O GOD, who searchest the heart and the reins! How deceitful is my heart! How many are the ways that lead to destruction! How innumerable are the wiles of the Devil! Yet by thy light they may all be discovered. O my GOD, make me willing to see the designs of my spiritual enemies against me, that I may resist and overcome them. My heart is a field where many tares are mixed with the wholesome wheat. If I search not, how shall those tares be rooted up? If I examine not, what can I expect, but that like the field of the slothful, and like the vineyard of the man void of understanding, it will be all grown over with thorns, and nettles will cover the face thereof? Shall I say, a little sleep, a little more slumber, till my poverty come on like an armed man? O my GOD, let my greatest care be, that thou and my soul may be friends. But how shall I know that thou art my friend, except I examine my soul, and see what tokens of thy love I find there? O let me not be afraid to know my thoughts, my words, my actions, my inclinations; that if I know they are evil, I may reform them; and that if I find they are good, I may rejoice in them. O teach me the art of searching my heart. Let me not continue a stranger to myself. Let it be a pleasure to me to take notice how I grow in grace. O keep me from wandering in the dark. Let me see how I go astray, that I may get into the right way again. I have

dwelt too long in the suburbs of religion. O persuade me to enter into the city which hath foundations. Let the reward that is before me, be a strong motive to me to put on the whole armour of God. O how sweet will it be to me to see thy assistances, the incomes of thy grace, the influences of thy SPIRIT, my progress in goodness, the abatement of my sins, the decay of my corruptions, and my nearer approach to heaven. If I examine my heart, all this will be made manifest to me; for thou wilt teach me the way of life, and in thy light I shall see light through JESUS CHRIST our LORD. Amen.

A LETTER
TO A PERSON OF QUALITY,
CONCERNING THE
LIVES
OF THE
PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS:
BY
ANTHONY HORNECK, D. D.

A
LETTER
TO A
PERSON OF QUALITY.

SIR,

THE great sense you have of the narrowness of the way, and the straitness of the gate, which lead to life, hath made you very often importunate with me to give you an account of a little book, "Concerning the Lives of the Primitive Christians." I have at last obeyed your commands; and I was the more willing to let it go abroad in company of this book, ["The Happy Ascetic; or, the Best Exercise,"] because it may serve to illustrate some passages in the Exercises which I have been describing.

It is in a manner impossible to consider the first beginning of the Church, without speaking something like paradoxes and mysteries. There is nothing to be seen in it, even then, that is in any way childish, or so mean as to offend a judicious eye, or unworthy the esteem and approbation of the gravest philosopher. The Church in that age, though an infant, was from its birth so lusty and vigorous, that though it never crushed snakes or vipers in its cradle, yet it conquered tigers, lions, and, what is worse, fires, and flames, and the sharpest torments. It knew nothing of the infirmities and weaknesses of a tender age, but did in its youth things becoming the seriousness and sobriety of the oldest men. And though its growth was prodigious, yet even upon its first entering into the world, its bigness and vastness seemed to vie with that of the earth; for it introduced a new world into the universe.

Such were the beginning and first institution of the Christian Church, that in it we find men, who voluntarily became little children ; children, who in wisdom exceeded patriarchs ; virgins, who had the prudence and gravity of matrons ; and matrons, endowed with virginal modesty and chastity. Men of grey hairs, and old in years, were children in malice, pride, and ambition ; and it was hard to say, which were the old, and which the young disciples, for the younger sort strove to equal, if not exceed, the elder in devotion.

Holiness was their ornament, and men were counted great, as they arrived to high degrees of piety ; and the more religious any man was, the greater respect he was thought worthy of.

The light by which they were attended filled the world, as the sun doth the universe : so soon did the world feel the influences and operations of these new stars, and was forced to acknowledge their divine power and virtue ! For they pressed through the chaos in which mankind lay, as souls pierce through bodies ; and the life, sense, and understanding, which they taught them, were wholly new, and so different from what was in the world before, that men gazed at the spectacle, and lost themselves in the admiration of it.

What advantages the soul can be supposed to give to the body, the same did the first Christians afford to the benighted world ; and whatever inconveniences the body puts the soul to, the same did the besotted world bring upon the first Christians. For as the soul tenderly desires the body's welfare, so did they the world's ; as the soul directs the body to do things rational, so did they the world ; as the soul restrains the body from doing mischief to itself, so did they the world ; and as the soul makes the members of the body instruments of rightcouness, so did they attempt to reform the deluded world into holiness. On the other side, as the body afflicteth the soul, so did the world persecute those first Christians ; as the body makes the soul live uneasy, so did they incommode these excellent men ; and as the body seems to long for nothing so much as the ruin of

the soul, so the destruction of those saints was the great thing at which the world aimed.

This Church was made up of persons who had not their original out of the brain of JUPITER, as the poets fable of MINERVA, but from the wounded side of the crucified JESUS. The water and blood which flowed from His wounds, was that which gave them being; and the same SPIRIT, who raised the mighty JESUS from his grave, quickened their souls, and transformed them into new creatures.

They were a commonwealth made up of great and low, of rulers and underlings, of governors and subjects; and yet nothing was more hard than to distinguish one from the other; for whatever the difference might be, they esteemed one another equal, and by their carriage one would have concluded that they had been all of the same degree and condition. Their pastors and chief men were more known by their munificence and good deeds, than by their coats of arms, or the splendour of their offices.

They seemed to be all of the same kindred; for the aged they honoured as Fathers, and the youths they tenderly loved as their Children. Those of the same age called one another Brethren; and in these titles they gloried more, than men now do in the lofty epithets of Duke, Earl, Baron, Knight, or Gentleman.

You might see amongst them many mothers, that never had any children: for virgins took care of innocent babes, as if they had been mothers. No family complained of barrenness or unfruitfulness; for they never wanted children to provide for, because those that had none of their own, would be sure to find some to take care of. None wanted paternal care, while so many fathers studied to do good; and men were readier to give than others were to ask, and seemed to be sorrowful if they had not objects, upon which they might exercise a paternal charity.

Many of their widows were the same that they were whilst their husbands lived; and finding that, upon the death of their husbands, they were become sisters of many brethren, they aimed at no other contract, but that with

CHRIST, who, if they were found worthy, would, as they thought, marry them at last to the service of the church, where they might exercise that maternal care on the poor and needy, which formerly they used to express to their own children. Here you would see none rejoicing that he had any thing of his own : for whatever he had, he looked upon his fellow-christians as co-heirs ; and was so well contented that they should inherit with him, that he thought his possessions a burthen, if his neighbours were not to share in them. This present life was the least thing they minded ; while that which is to come engrossed their thoughts. They were so entirely *Christians*, that in a manner they were nothing else ; and cared not for being any thing else, lest if they should be something else, they should be suspected of deviating from their Master's steps.

Hence it was, that the pagans accused them of unrighteousness and unprofitableness, as if they were dead weights in the world, contributing nothing to the welfare and prosperity of mankind, and as if they stood for ciphers in human societies ; though none were more ready to communicate of the profit of their labours to others, and they did therefore on purpose keep close to their calling, in order that they might be able to relieve the needy. And though they were loth to take upon them the employment of Magistrates and Governors, lest the Emperor's and God's commands should clash, and they should lie under a temptation of obeying man more than God ; yet, whenever they were thought worthy to bear office in the church, they readily embraced the charge, that they might be in a greater capacity to improve the talents which God had given them to his glory, and his people's good ; and they were pleased with the trouble of the office, that the world might see they had no design of gain or worldly interest in the administration.

They spake little ; but their thoughts were always great and heavenly : and, as they looked upon sublunary objects as too mean for their minds to rest on, so their care was to keep the eyes of their understandings fixed on that world which fades not away.

Their business was to *live*, not to *talk* great matters ; and the name of *Christian* did so charm them, that though there were various degrees of men among them, ecclesiastics, laymen, virgins, widows, married persons, confessors, martyrs, and friends, yet the name *Christian* swallowed up all ; and in this they triumphed beyond all other titles in the world. This made ATTALUS, mentioned by EUSEBIUS,—when the Governor asked him what Countryman he was, who his father and mother were, what was his trade, profession, or employment, and whether he was rich or poor,—give no answer but this, “ That he was a Christian.” And by such answers they gave the world to understand, that their kindred, pedigree, nobility, trade, profession, blood, did all consist in this one thing ; and that beyond this there could be no greater honour and dignity.

Their communications or answers, in common discourses, were “ yea, yea,” and “ nay, nay.” An oath they shunned as much as perjury : and a lie among them was more rare than a sea-monster is to the inhabitants of a continent ; for they said, that in their baptism they were signed with the mark of truth, and that they could not be servants of the God of truth, if they should yield but to the least appearance of falsehood.

CHRIST was the charming word among them ; and they heard nothing with greater joy, than that glorious name. His death and sufferings raised their souls, and his cross was more precious to them than rubies. Hereby they learned to despise the world ; and the marrow, virtue, and efficacy of their religion, was the death of JESUS.—This death they remembered, not only in the Sacrament, but at their common meals ; and when they refreshed their bodies with meat and drink, they talked of that meat which would feed them to everlasting life. And herein they walked contrary to the custom of the drunkards of old, who used to carry a death’s head with them to their drunken meetings, and set it upon the table ; and with the sight of that, and the remembrance of what they must shortly come to, they encouraged themselves in drunkenness. The first Christians

remembered indeed the death of CHRIST at their ordinary tables ; but it was in order to make pain, and torment, and death, and the cross, familiar to them : for the afflictions of this life they looked upon as the midwives that promoted their new birth, the best companions of their faith, and the most faithful nurses of their hopes.

In the cities and towns where they lived, none was unknown to the other ; for they prayed together, heard the word together, met frequently at meals together, and were continually helpful one to the other. Hence, wherever they met, they knew one another ; and when they durst not do it with their lips, yet with their eyes and gestures they would salute one another, send kisses of peace one to another, rejoice in the common hope, and assist one another in adversities. “ This is one of us,” said such a saint, “ for we have seen him in our oratories ; we have prayed with him ; we have been at the LORD’S table together ; we have heard the Scriptures read together ; we have kneeled together ; we have been instructed together.”—O happy kindred, which comes by prayer, and communion of the body and blood of JESUS ! O blessed relations, where men are not called brothers of the sun or of the stars, as the ancient tyrants styled themselves, but brethren of CHRIST, children of God, and citizens of heaven !

When a Christian, who was a stranger, came to them, before he showed his testimonials, they knew him by his lean visage, and meagre face, (to which his frequent fasting had brought him,) by the modesty of his eyes, by the gravity of his speech, by his gait and habit, and mortified behaviour ; for something divine did shine through their looks, and one might read the characters of the spirit in their countenance. Nor is it strange, that a good man should be known by his carriage ; for, to this day, a serious person, though he says nothing, has something in his lineaments, and features, and postures, which will betray the inward zeal and sincerity of his soul.

Whenever they were thrust into the crowd of malefactors, their fellow-christians soon guessed who they were ; for

they hastened with meekness to their martyrdom, and, without expressing any impatience or indignation, submitted their necks to the stroke of the axe, prepared for them. They used to look frequently up to heaven ; and one might see, by their smiles, that betwixt God and them there was more than an ordinary correspondence. Sometimes they would laugh at the pain they suffered, and, in the very jaws of death, betray a taste of immortality. Christianity taught them to suffer valiantly ; indeed it was no other but a science which instructed men to despise riches, honours, and torments too, in order to everlasting glory.

Their Presidents and Pastors were known by no other character, but that of officiousness and charity ; nor had their shepherds any other mark to be distinguished by, but their willingness to advance the good of the sheep, and their readiness to every good word and work. And indeed so were the Christians in general known by their mutual love, and kind offices. If any fell sick, the rest did cheerfully run to comfort him ; and of this employment their women were chiefly ambitious, who seldom stirred out of their own houses, but upon such occasions, and when they resorted to their Oratories. They were seen but rarely in the streets, except such charitable employments called them forth ; for none denied her neighbour her care, nor could any worldly respects discourage them from that officiousness. If any were rich, or noble, they were the more ready to express their compassion ; and women of the highest descent were the most forward to assist the calamitous : for religion had mortified in them all punctilios of honour, and made them remember that in CHRIST they were all equal. She in whose veins the noblest blood did run, would say of her poor distressed neighbour, “She is my sister, my fellow-member, one that hath part with me in my dear REDEEMER : if she be ancient, she is my mother, if younger, she is my daughter.” Nor were these expressions names of course only, but they were written in their hearts, and their lips spoke what their minds believed, and these words were at once pronounced and thought. Hence it was,

that the greatest ladies touched their poorer neighbours' sores, bound up their wounds, applied plasters to them, made their beds, and tended them, as the meanest servants. Here you might see the industry of one, there the sweetness and patience of another; one would turn the sick sister, the other help her up, the third dress her, the fourth feed her; and in all this the sick creature saw, as it were, the face of the LORD JESUS. She that tended the sick looked upon CHRIST in her that was sick; and she that was sick thought she saw CHRIST in the person that tended her. So divine, so heavenly, were their works of mercy, that one was to the other in GOD'S stead; and that saying of CHRIST, "Inasmuch as you have done it unto the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me," did not depart from their memories. Thus stood the case with the holy women then; and this advantage they reaped by their charitable care, that, when their husbands died, they were taken as deaconesses into the church, and thus they prepared themselves for the service of CHRIST and the Church.

If any were imprisoned upon the account of religion, all that knew them would fly to them. However hard-hearted might be the keeper of the prison, they would find out a way to smooth him; no lock, no bar was so strong, but they would make a shift to break it, either by their gifts, or soft answers,—not to make the gaolers false to their trusts, but to get an opportunity of seeing their suffering friends. When they saw them, one would kiss their chains and fetters; another would lay his lips to their wounds; a third would give their bruised members and tired bodies such refreshment as was needful. And, dismal as the dungeon was, there they would discourse of CHRIST, sing psalms, and pray together; and their Pastors would come and administer the LORD'S Supper to them, requiring no other temple than that of a devout heart, nor insisting on the ceremony of an altar, but on a wounded spirit.

If any of them were driven into exile, in every place they met with brethren and fellow-christians. These would run to them, comfort them, lead them into their houses, and

treat them as members of their own family; especially when, by letters from their brethren, they understood that for **CHRIST'S** sake they were driven from their native home.

If any were condemned to work in mines or quarries, the neighbouring Christians, who heard of it, would presently come together, help the innocent man, endeavour to make his burden light, feed him with victuals, and assist him in performing his task.

Were any of them, through the malice of the Heathen Governors, forced to labour hard in caves and dens, or scourged, beaten, and abused for the name of the **LORD JESUS**; the rest who heard of it would not complain, nor think their brethren unhappy, but rather reckon themselves so, because they were not "counted worthy to suffer for the name of **JESUS**."

If the fury of tyrants abated or remitted at any time, and the imprisoned and afflicted believers got leave to return home again, some wounded or bruised, some with disjointed bones, some half-burned, some maimed, some with one arm, or one eye, or one leg only: their friends would run out to them, and strive who should first receive them into their houses. Happy was the man that could kiss their wounds, and refresh them with necessaries and conveniences; and the longer any man could harbour such a Christian in his house, the happier he thought himself: and such men as had suffered thus for **CHRIST**, they honoured for the future, and esteemed them equal with their Pastors and Presidents. Indeed out of these they chose their Bishops, thinking those fittest to serve at **CHRIST'S** altar, who had already made themselves a sacrifice for him. Thus men purchased the degree of Pastors by their holiness; and their eminent sanctity, which pressed even through wounds and tortures for the name of **CHRIST**, prepared them for that function. Men that were strong to suffer, they justly thought might be fittest to labour in God's Church; and they that had been such champions for the truth, they looked upon as the most proper instruments to defend it to their death.

Nor did their kindness extend only to their friends, but reached even to their greatest enemies ; and they who just before were persecuted by them, if their persecutors fell sick or were afflicted, or if the plague of God came upon them, would offer their services, support them, comfort them, attend their bed-sides, lend them their helping hand, cherish them, supple their sores, relieve them, and weep over their state,—to the amazement of the pagan world, who were now ready to look upon them as Angels, when but just before they thought them as bad as Devils.

Poverty was the least thing that troubled them ; nor did want sit so heavy on their souls, as it doth on ours. For they had learned to undervalue riches ; and that in consequence of these two impressions which the Apostle's doctrine had made on their souls.

1. This sentiment sunk deep into their hearts, that “here we have no continuing city, but seek one to come :” —that all we see here is but shadow and imagery, but the substance is not yet visible ; that the fashion of this world will pass away, and the glories below the moon afford no real satisfaction. This made it ridiculous, in their eyes, to snatch at a butterfly, or a flying feather. They rationally believed, that whatever is subject to time and change will certainly make itself wings, and flee away, and leave the soul as empty as it found it ; and that therefore their thoughts ought to be turned another way, and fixed on objects in which constant satisfaction, permanent happiness, perfect beauty, and uninterrupted joys are to be found. And indeed, this view, if duly weighed, will produce a mighty contempt of temporal things.

2. Another thing, which did no less contribute to it, was their “looking for and hasting to the coming of the day of God.”—“The time is short,” cried their Pastors ; “The LORD is coming ; he will be upon you before you are aware. To what purpose will ye treasure up riches, lands, goods, which the fire will shortly consume, and carry away ?” No marvel if, under these thoughts and

circumstances, they freely parted with their worldly goods, and sold their lands and houses, and brought what they had, and laid it down at the Apostles' feet."

Nor did the care of their children fill their hearts with anxious thoughts: for they were sensible, that whenever the Church had notice of their want, they would certainly be looked after: because as many fathers and mothers left their estates, and what they had, to the church, so the church employed those legacies or gifts in supporting all those who were necessitous. Besides this, their Pastors, both by their doctrine and example, admonished them to be diligent in working with their own hands, that they might get something not only to be beneficial to themselves, but to others too; and indeed they thought they did little or nothing, if, of what they got, they did not communicate to those who were not able to help themselves.

They had nothing that was superfluous; and hence it was, that there was but little striving about what they left. To lay up much goods for many years, they thought was fitter for Heathens than for Christians; and having seen no such thing in their Master, they could not tell how it could be proper in his Servants.

They believed, that it was their Pastor's office to take care of all, to maintain the poor, and to distribute to all according to their several necessities; for since God took upon Him the care of feeding the world, they thought it would not be unbecoming his Ministers to do so too. This made them intrust, at first to the Apostles, and afterwards to their spiritual Pastors, what they could spare, in order to receive of them again, when they should stand in need. And now their Teachers did truly become their fathers, and they acknowledged themselves to be their children; and owning them for their fathers, they gave them a right to admonish them, to correct them, to reprove them, to direct them, and to lead them to perfection; and owned a strong obligation, at the same time, to love, honour, reverence, and obey them.

And though the number of Christians was already pro-

digiously increased, yet were not their numbers troublesome to their Pastors, who loved to do good, and to spend themselves and to be spent in that service. They were men who had no design but to lay themselves out for God and his Church ; and, like MOSES, were content to be surrounded with people all day long, in order to discharge that paternal care of their souls and bodies which they had undertaken. Nor were their Pastors therefore the richer, because their disciples brought what they had to them : for they that were to receive from them were more than those who gave ; and they took it in only with a design to disperse it again among the needy. Love of money, and worldly cares and desires, were things they had an antipathy against ; and though out of that stock they provided themselves with necessaries, yet the engrossing any thing besides to themselves, was a thought as far from their minds, as the heaven they longed for was from that earth on which they trampled. For, alas ! what greediness could there be after temporal means in them, who were already greater than the world could make them, and took delight in nothing but surveying that glory in which, ere long, they should rejoice and triumph ? Thus they took the people's money, without any danger of covetousness. They were men that had fought for CHRIST, and left all to follow him ; their thoughts were big with the promises of the Gospel, and consequently with hopes of everlasting joys ; they had already tasted of the powers of the world to come, and mocked at worldly-mindedness. They remembered that they were stewards for the poor, and nursing-fathers to persons in distress. This made the people love them exceedingly ; not because they took delight to see their Pastors poor, but because they saw that they, who had so much money at their disposal, would make no use of it for their own interest, being contentedly poor amidst that plenty, and choosing to want themselves, rather than see others faint. Hence the Christians gave them their own freely, for they believed they could lose nothing by it ; and long experience had so confirmed that belief, that envy itself could make no impressions

and them to the contrary. When it was in *their* hands, they thought it was safer than in their own; and being thereby freed from many cares and incumbrances, they pressed more cheerfully to the promised mark.

If any Christian kept any land in his hands, his care was so to use his income, as to give God the first-fruits of it; to bring his gifts to the Church; to help and assist the sick; and to relieve the prisoners and captives, not only such as were within the town he lived in, but others also. Thus did those men live under riches as under thorns; and were sensible of nothing so much as this, that great wealth is a great temptation to be vain and sensual,—which made them use this self-denial in their incomes.

He that for a kindness which he did to his neighbour expected a recompense, was looked upon as a person greedy of filthy lucre; and he that could do nothing for his friend without a reward, or prospect of some profit to himself, was censured as a person ignorant of the fundamental law of their religion. Usury, and such names, were scarcely heard of among them; and oppression was a thing of which they thought that none who named the name of CHRIST could be guilty. In a word, they desired nothing so much in this world as to be quickly gone from it; and they thought it the most joyful news imaginable, to understand that they were to be dissolved, and to go to CHRIST.

This was the Temper, Nature, and Constitution of that commonwealth. The members of it looked mean and contemptible. Nothing about them was pompous, either in clothes, or diet, or habitation, or household-furniture. Such among them as were noble, or learned, or of gentled extraction, laid aside their pride, and all their swelling titles; forgot that they were better born or educated than others; and became like their brethren. Plaiting and curling the hair was a thing that both their men and women proscribed from their care; and they thought that labour lost which was employed on such superfluities. They were jealous of their serious frame of spirit; and therefore all such dances as might serve to infuse vanity into them

minds, or damp their zeal in religion, they shunned, as they did houses infected with the plague. They minded no such things as modes and fashions ; nor did any new habit or ornament that came up entice them to imitation. Decency was their rule, and modesty the standard of their habit and conversation. They wore nothing about them that was either costly or curious ; and their greatest study and contrivance was, how to advance their souls, and make them fit for “the marriage of the LAMB !” Their garments were either linen, or woollen, or fur, or sheep-skin ; and their furniture was mean and homely.

Without GOD they attempted nothing ; and whatever enterprise it was to which they betook themselves, they sanctified it by prayer and supplication. If they went out either to sow, or to plough, or to reap, or to build, GOD’s blessing was first sought and begged ; and they never put on their clothes, but they entertained themselves all the while with some holy reflections. Theatres, and seeing of plays, they hated, as things contrary to their profession : and though the heathen despised them for it, looking upon them as unsociable, strangers to the art of conversation, melancholy wretches, and no better than vermin of the earth ; yet they mattered not their censures, but triumphed more in a good conscience, than the others could do in all the glories of this present world. The world’s contempt was their glory ; and they rejoiced in being scorned by the vulgar, that they might with greater earnestness long after a better inheritance. If any wanted business, he would find some ; and they who had no need to work for their living, worked for the poor. From idleness they had an aversion, as from the root of evil ; and great men and women would do something for which the needy might be the better. The greatest lady would not disdain to spin, or sow, or knit, for her distressed neighbour ; and, like bees, they were ever busy, and employed for the common good.

Love of the world was death to them ; and they thought it a certain sign that they had no portion in CHRIST, if

they did attempt to serve both God and Mammon. To be in the world, and not of the world, was their motto ; and to be other men than they seemed to be, was the thing at which they chiefly aimed. They seemed to be profane, because they would worship no heathen gods ; but they were the most devout persons in the world towards the true God. Not a few left their high places, and great dignities, to become Christians ; and chose to be low and contemptible in the world, that they might have no impediments in their way to heaven.

Servants never concerned themselves to get their freedom ; for their masters were Christians, and themselves were so. Both cheerfully discharged their duties one to another, and consequently lived in perfect peace. Many servants, who might have had their freedom, would not ; because they lived sufficiently happy under their believing masters. And while they saw nothing but love in their masters, their very bondage was perfect freedom.

Where a whole family was christian, they all rose together ; and, at one and the same time, prayed, and read, and sung psalms, and observed one way and custom in their devotions. If one family had any thing to do more than ordinary, the neighbouring family would help them. If one was to fast, his neighbour fasted with him ; if one was to pray for some signal blessing, his neighbour prayed with him ; if one wept, his neighbour wept with him ; if one mourned, his neighbour mourned with him, as if both had committed the same sin. In a word, they had their joys and sorrows common ; and they might be said to be all in one, and one in all.

In their meals they were so temperate, so abstinent, that our fasts were but their ordinary way of living. One reason why they were so holy at their tables was, that, for a long time, they constantly received the Eucharist, either before or after meals : and in such meetings they expressed great love one to another ; and made their friendship inviolable, for they sealed it with the blood of Jesus. These were true Love-Fests ; and they were

managed with such gravity, charity, modesty, and singing of psalms, that the world might see that they were a preparation for a greater Supper.

Their houses were open to strangers, as well as to their friends and neighbours; and where the traveller could produce a certificatè that he was a practical Christian, he could not fail of a most hearty welcome. Hospitality was their badge; and he that would not receive a brother into his house, because poor and ragged, was either forbidden the Church, or not suffered to come into it.

Their Pastors and Rulers obliged them to certain fasts; but, besides those, of their own accord they chastened themselves by frequent abstinence. In short, whatever was voluptuous they hated, and looked upon as unsuitable to disciples of the crucified Jesus, and so improper for that perfect wisdom at which they aimed, that they shunned it like the rankest poison, and used no more food than what was just necessary for the support of that life which the great Creator had given them to spend to his glory. Both their faith and reason told them, that as the body waxes stronger by the death of the soul, so the soul becomes more valiant and lively by the death of the body. This made them conquerors of those pleasures of the flesh, which in all ages have weakened the bravest men into women, melted hearts of iron, and conquered the greatest conquerors of the world. To suppress such satisfactions of the flesh, they were so watchful, so courageous, so magnanimous, that they seemed Angels more than men; and were actually nearer to God, to whom they lived, than to the world in which they lived. In their lives they were chaste and modest; and in their married estate moderate and holy.

In the works of their calling, they would sing of CHRIST; and made spiritual objects so familiar to them, that in their very sleep and dreams they occupied their imaginations. They were always ready for prayer, and holy ejaculations; and so addicted to the love of goodness, that they could not endure a vicious person. If they met with any such

in their assemblies, they thrust him out from their communion ; and made it criminal for any Christian either to eat, or drink, or converse, or keep company with him.

They took particular notice of him who taught any thing contrary to the doctrine of their Pastors ; and no plague-sore was shunned more than a new, up-start principle. If they heard any thing contrary to the Faith delivered to the Saints, they either stopped their ears, or hastened to be gone from the place. New opinions their teachers warned them against ; and the character of heresy was, “ That the Doctrine was unknown to the Apostles.” To continue this purity in the Church, their custom was, to read the Scripture, and hear it explained by their Pastors : and according to their expositions they understood those oracles.

It was a very common thing, in those days, both for laymen and clergymen to learn the Bible by heart ; and many of them had the word so ready, that nothing could befall them but they had a medicine ready for it from that inexhaustible treasury. From hence their souls got more than ordinary strength ; and their minds received that vivacity and quickness, which gave life even to their bodies, notwithstanding their watching, fasting, and other voluntary penalties.

Of their Teachers they were so observant, that without them they would begin nothing, and go no where without their Letters of Recommendation. Without their advice they would not marry, nor do any thing considerable in their civil affairs : for they looked upon them as their Fathers ; and as religion had made them so, they thought the obligation to consult them upon all occasions was the stronger. These they received into their houses, as the Saints of old did Angels, with joy and trembling ; and when ever they met them, though upon the road, or in the streets, they would refuse to part till they had given them their blessing. They thought it no small happiness to lodge their Pastors at their houses ; with them they prayed, and hoped that now their prayers could not be wanting, when joined with the incense of those who had

so often moved God to be merciful to a whole congregation. For this reason, they were desirous to entertain pious men in general, to do them good, and to relieve them, as they did their domestics; for they thought the presence of such men a blessing to their families, and a protection from innumerable evils that might otherwise befall them.

From the unity and peaceableness of their Teachers it was, that the Christians then, though very numerous, continued unanimous in the primitive Doctrine and Discipline; and though the several Assemblies might differ in rites and ceremonies, yet the mighty love which they bore to one another constrained them to overlook those differences; and though they varied in some outward acts of worship, yet their affections were so strongly glued together, that nothing but death could break the league or amity.—If one neighbour chanced to quarrel with another, and they broke forth into contention and enmity, they were excluded from the prayers of the Assembly, until they had cordially reconciled themselves one to the other. This punishment was then thought great and grievous; and men were so uneasy under these excommunications, that the fear of them kept them from animosities. Rather than undergo such censures, they would suffer themselves to be defrauded; and when they were beaten, would not beat again; when reviled, would not revile again; when abused, would not abuse again. Nay, they looked upon an unjust calumny as a piece of martyrdom, and therefore bore it undauntedly. Those that knew themselves guilty of a great sin, durst not appear in public; and they that had fallen into any notorious errors, durst not so much profane the prayers of the Church, as to appear there with the rest of the Assembly. So great was the dread of God's Majesty in those days, that even a desperate offender was afraid of taking God's Covenant in his mouth, while he hated to be reformed.

Their Meeting, or coming together to pray, they esteemed a thing so sacred, that no frowns, no thunders, no threatenings of tyrants, could make them forbear it.

They justly thought that their enemies might by their authority forbid, but could not with any colour of reason prohibit, their Assemblies. This made them flock to their Oratories, though it was death to go; and parents with their children would run thither, though the next news they were likely to hear, was "*Christianos ad Leones;*" "Throw these Dogs to the Lions." Though they were thrust into mines and prisons, yet they would find opportunities to pray, and celebrate the Communion together: for some of their brethren, who knew of their distress, flocked to them; and the first thing they did together, was to lay force on Heaven with their tears and prayers. For, indeed, it was death to them not to join with their fellow-christians in supplications and strong cries; and though they were very diligent in this duty in their private houses, yet they took no prayers to be so weighty or prevalent, as those that were offered up in company.

The days they appointed for public prayer, were the Lord's Day, the Anniversaries of their Martyrs, and the Wednesday and Friday of every week, on which two days they had their stations, and fasted, and humbled themselves before ALMIGHTY GOD;—besides their Vigils at night, which they used to spend in prayer, and in the celebration of GOD's goodness and holiness. Strange was their longing for the House of GOD; and the thirsty earth cannot gape for rain, more than they panted after their going with the multitude to their Oratories. This made DIONYSIUS ALEXANDRINUS, when driven into exile, and used very harshly by the soldiers who had the charge of him, complain, in a letter to his friend, how near it went to him to be deprived of those opportunities of meeting his brethren on the usual festivals; and this he professes was infinitely more troublesome to him, than to be chased from his native home, or to live upon bread and water, or to lie on the cold ground, or to endure other inconveniences.

In their public Assemblies, even little children, that had

been baptized, would come and appear among the graver sort, and beg of their Pastors to offer up their prayers for their advancement in the ways of holiness, and give themselves up to their direction and government. So fervent were all sorts of people among them; and they seemed ambitious of nothing so much, as of exceeding one another in strictness and watchfulness.

To their Princes and Magistrates they were ever very submissive, and in all lawful things obedient. In their prayers they always remembered them; and though they persecuted and afflicted them, yet that did not abate their zeal and vows for their prosperity. Rebellion against their Governors they hated as witchcraft; and ever thought it safer to suffer than to resist. Hence they paid tribute without murmuring; for their opinion was, that no man could have that power, except it were given him from above. His tyranny could not make them neglect their duty; nor his bad government tempt them to forget their allegiance. Where the man who was over them was rough and hard-hearted, they looked upon this Providence as a means to try their faith; and even when they might have resisted and conquered, they would not, because they thought it was unsuitable to their religion.

This was to be a Christian; a creature outwardly corruptible, yet, at the same time, with the hand of faith grasping heaven, and labouring day and night, that he might have something to give to God's Ministers, to the poor, and to his own family.

Not a few of them renounced the satisfactions of matrimony, lived single, forsook all, buried themselves in poor cottages, studied the Scriptures, contemplated heaven, and thus lived to God alone. Some travelled into far countries, preached the Gospel, and, when they had laid a good foundation there, went farther, and spent their lives in pains, and labours, and doing good. Thousands of their virgins freely dedicated themselves to God, and

would be married to none but Him; and though at many times they were tempted by rich fortunes, yet nothing could alter their resolutions.

It is true that, even among these Christians in the purest ages, there were divers individuals, who by their lives disgraced their religion. But these were chastised with severe discipline; and, as long as they were in a state of sin, were not looked upon as Christians, nor did any Christian converse with them. If they repented, they were forced to make their repentance public, and to give such demonstration of it, that the Devil himself could not but acknowledge the sincerity of it. By weeping, and prostrating themselves before God's people, and imploring the assistance of believers, and a hundred such austerities, they sought to be reconciled to God and to his Church; which made the Fathers say, that "The Penitents were no scandal, but an ornament of the Church." They were in a manner a distinct Church; and their way to be united to the more sincere believers was now harder, than at their first embracing of Christianity.

With this kind of life the first Christians amazed the unbelieving world; and their power and number quickly grew so formidable, that the Emperors themselves began to be startled at their progress, and therefore employed their might and greatness to oppose it. To crush their towering piety, the heathens showed them racks, flames, gibbets, gridirons, cauldrons, boiling oil, lions, bears, and wild bulls, and set before them the worldly prudence of philosophers. But, by the grace and assistance of that Jesus who strengthened them, they were more undaunted, at their torments, than their hangmen; and by their sufferings surmounted all the great acts that were ever done by heroes, and the most famous conquerors. They overcame death by a desire of death; and were more willing to die than their executioners to suffer them. Their blood proved the seed of the Church; and the more they massacred, the more their numbers grew, till at

last the Emperors themselves became Christians, and were forced to yield to the faith and patience of JESUS.

I am persuaded, that you have chosen the better part ; and, as I do not question your belief of these passages, so that these Saints may be your pattern, and their actions the great rule of your life, and the SPIRIT of GOD your guide in these ways of holiness, is the hearty wish and prayer of,

Sir,
Your affectionate Friend and Servant,
ANTHONY HORNECK.

END OF VOL. XVI.

